The University of Chicago

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES IN CANDIDACY
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ORIENTAL LANGUAGES
AND LITERATURES
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# THE SONGS OF THE HARPERS[1]

MIRIAM LICHTHEIM

## I. THE DISCUSSION OF HARPERS' SONGS SINCE THEIR DISCOVERY

On the north wall of the passage leading from the outer hall of his tomb (No. 50 at Thebes) into the inner shrine the priest Neferhotep is shown seated at a table piled high with food offerings. His wife sits at his side, and in front of him squats a harper (now destroyed). The words which he sings to the accompaniment of his harp are engraved above the group (Pl. VII). The first part of the song, which contains its chief burden, runs as follows:

How reposed is this righteous lord!
The kindly fate has come to pass.
Bodies pass away since the time of the god,
New generations come in their place.
Re shows himself at dawn,
Atum goes to rest in the Western Mountain.
Men beget,
Women conceive,
Every nostril breathes the air,
Dawn comes and their children have gone to their tombs.
Make holiday, O priest!
Put incense and fine oil together to thy nostrils
And garlands of lotus and *rrmt*-flowers upon thy breast;
While thy sister whom thou lovest sits at thy side.
Put song and music before thee,
Cast all evil behind thee;
Bethink thee of joys
Till that day has come of landing
At the land that loveth silence
<Where> the heart of the son-whom-he-loves does not weary.
Make holiday, Neferhotep the justified!
Thou good priest pure of hands.
I have heard all that happened to the ———,
Their buildings have crumbled,
Their dwellings are no more;
They are as if they had not come into being
Since the time of the god.

It was this song which, having been published by Dümichen[2] in 1869, received, in 1873, its first translation and commentary at the hands of Stern[3] and, together with the "Antef" song published in the following year,[4] formed the basis for all subsequent discussion of "The Harper's Song." According to Stern, the harper sang at a mortuary feast celebrated in the tomb in honor of the deceased. His song urged the survivors to enjoy life while it lasts. And it is such a mortuary feast which Herodotus had in mind when he wrote that in their festival gatherings the Egyptians passed a wooden image of a dead man around in a coffin and exhorted each other to drink and make merry.[5]

These views of Stern are important as a statement of the problems, not as their solution. All his conclusions need to be revised, but they aptly indicate the questions which the song raises and which can be stated as follows: (1) What is the nature and purpose of the song? (2) At what occasion or occasions was it performed?

[1] I acknowledge in profound gratitude the many valuable suggestions and critical observations made by Professors John A. Wilson, Henri Frankfort, and Keith C. Seele. I am especially indebted to Professor Seele, who has generously placed at my disposal his hand copies and photographs of the two hitherto unpublished harpers' songs from the Theban tombs of Paser and Piay and additional hand copies and photographs of several of the other harpers' texts.

[2] *Historische Inschriften altaegyptischer Denkmäler*, II, 40.

[3] *ZÄS*, XI (1873), 58–63 and 72–73.

[4] *TSBA*, III (1874), 380–81 and 385–87.

[5] Herodotus ii. 78.

At the time of Stern's writing the Egyptian literary and archeological material which has a bearing on the problems of harpers' songs was not sufficiently known. Hence too much weight was accorded to the observations of the Greek writers led by Herodotus. Ever since Stern, the "banquet" of Herodotus has loomed large in the discussion, although the Greek writer had made no mention of harpers and although we have no Egyptian evidence to bear out his description of Egyptian banqueting custom. Thus the application of this Herodotus passage has prejudiced the inquiry into the nature of the feasts at which the harpers' songs were supposedly performed —an inquiry which can have results only if based on Egyptian, not on Greek, sources.

Goodwin in his publication of the Antef song[6] also referred to Herodotus but differed from Stern in believing that the feast in question is the worldly, not the funerary, banquet. According to him, the theme of the song "is the words which Herodotus tells us were pronounced at feasts when a mummied image was carried round and presented to each of the guests." He further remarks that the song is "one of those solemn and lugubrious compositions by which the Egyptians in the midst of their feasts were reminded of the shortness of human joys." With this shifting of the scene from the tomb to the banquet hall, the character of the song appears in a different light: What for Stern was merriment in the midst of gloom is for Goodwin a solemn note introduced at a merry occasion.[7]

With Maspero's new edition of the Antef and Neferhotep songs,[8] which included two additional harpers' texts from Neferhotep's tomb, which, though published,[9] had remained untranslated, the pendulum swings back from the worldly banquet of Goodwin to the funerary banquet of Stern. In addition, Maspero is the first to acknowledge the existence of a problem in the fact that the "make-merry" advice of the Neferhotep song is addressed not to the guests attending the funerary feast but to the deceased himself. This difficulty, however, he quickly resolves by telling us that the Egyptian dead were not dead in our sense of the word.[10] Maspero believed that the harpers' songs were sung in the tomb at funerary feasts over which the deceased were felt to preside, that the songs contain a *carpe diem* message which is addressed to all attendants of the banquet, the living and the dead, and that this message originated in worldly feast songs as part of a custom intended as a reminder of death. Again the argument is clinched by the Herodotus passage.

Maspero's ideas were adopted by Bénédite, who re-edited the three Neferhotep texts in his publication of the whole tomb.[11] He, too, affirms that the harpers' songs were sung at mortuary feasts in the tombs, having been adapted from worldly drinking songs whence they derive their praise of life, which, though originally conceived as advice to the living, is not out of place in the funerary context, since, in the Egyptian mind, there is no sharp distinction between life and death. Hence these songs are well within the boundaries of Egyptian religion.

Similar opinions were voiced by

[6] See n. 4 above.

[7] The objection might be raised that the Antef song which Goodwin deals with is different in spirit from Stern's Neferhotep text. This difference, however, was not taken into account by the early commentators.

[8] *Etudes égyptiennes*, I (1886), 162 ff.

[9] Dümichen, *Hist. Inschr.*, II, 40*a*.

[10] *Etudes égyptiennes*, I (1886), 171.

[11] *Mémoires de la Mission Française*, V, 489–540.

Brugsch[12] and by Wiedemann,[13] both making light of the incongruity of recording *carpe diem* songs in the tombs.

The anticlimax to these harmonizing interpretations is provided by Max Müller's comments to his edition of harpers' songs (Antef and Neferhotep I),[14] where, with more erudition than sympathy, he dwells on what he considers their brazenly heretical character, their closeness to Epicurean songs from all over the world, and the illogicality and superficiality of the Egyptian mind as apparent in the use of such songs for funerary purposes. Thus Müller inaugurated the view that the Antef and Neferhotep songs are distinctly heretical and hedonistic drinking songs. He treats the two texts as being essentially one and the same song, the Neferhotep variant having been expanded by pious interpolations in order to render the heresy harmless. The original song from which they derive he equates with the "Maneros" song mentioned by Herodotus (ii. 79).

The introduction of this Herodotus passage is as unfortunate as the use made of Herodotus' banquet. For there exist various Greek explanations of the word "Maneros," none of which is borne out by Egyptian sources. According to Herodotus, "Maneros" is a song of mourning lamenting the death of the son of the first king of Egypt who bore that name. But Plutarch (*De Iside et Osiride* 17) gives three different explanations of the word, one of them being that it is an Egyptian formula of greeting uttered by drinkers at feasts. Müller's equation of the harper's song with the Maneros was foreshadowed by Lauth, who, as early as 1869 (i.e., four years before the publication of the first harper's song), claimed to have proved that "Maneros" was the opening phrase of a banquet song urging enjoyment of the pleasures of life.[15] The many scholars who have used the term "Maneros" for one or another of the harpers' songs have unsuccessfully striven to discover the Egyptian etymology of the word.[16] In spite of the complete failure of these efforts, some recent commentators continue to use it.[17] Toward an understanding of harpers' songs the label has contributed nothing except confusion.

The skeptic or agnostic character of the songs, which Müller was the first to emphasize, now begins to hold the attention of the commentators. Breasted attached the two songs (Antef and Neferhotep I) to a skeptic movement in the First Intermediate Period and the early Middle Kingdom. But whereas Müller regarded them as secular drinking songs, Breasted believed them to have been songs of mourning sung at funerary feasts in the tombs.[18] Summarizing the content of the Antef song, he concludes that the song reveals a

> scepticism which doubts *all* means, material or otherwise, for attaining felicity or even survival beyond the grave. To such doubts there is no answer; there is only a means of sweeping them temporarily aside, a means to be found in sensual gratification which drowns such

[12] *Die Aegyptologie*, p. 162.

[13] *Herodots zweites Buch mit sachlichen Erläuterungen*, p. 331.

[14] *Die Liebespoesie der alten Ägypter*, pp. 29–37.

[15] *Sitzgsber. Bayer. Ak.*, 1869, pp. 163–94.

[16] Wilkinson, *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* (1st ed.), II, 252; Brugsch, *Die Adonissage*, p. 24; Moret, *La Mise à mort du dieu en Egypte*, p. 22; Mariette, *Le Sérapéum de Memphis*, p. 125; Müller, *Liebespoesie*, p. 37; Möller, *ZÄS*, LVI (1921), 78; Gressmann, *Tod und Auferstehung des Osiris*, p. 20. For a refutation of Möller's etymology, which had been adopted by Gressmann, see Scharff and Hengstenberg in *ZÄS*, LXXII (1937), 143.

[17] Notably Kees in *Totenglauben und Jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Aegypter*, p. 451, and *ZÄS*, LXII (1927), 77. For an energetic protest against the use of the term see Rusch's article on Maneros in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1927).

[18] *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 181–82; *The Dawn of Conscience*, pp. 162–63.

doubts in forgetfulness. "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die."[19]

A hitherto neglected aspect was brought to the fore when, in 1913, Gardiner re-edited and translated the second Neferhotep song under the title "In praise of death."[20] It could then no longer be overlooked that this song contains no skepticism and no "make-merry" advice but that, quite on the contrary, it praises death as the blessed eternal existence. In consequence, most subsequent comments on harpers' songs tell us that there exist two types of harpers' songs, the one—skeptic-hedonistic—urging enjoyment of life, the other piously praising death. According to Erman, the pious song from the tomb of Neferhotep was intended as a protest against its impious counterpart.[21] And for Kees the two Neferhotep songs reflect the struggle between the forces of skepticism and those of traditional faith.[22]

When, in 1935, Varille published three harpers' songs of the Nineteenth Dynasty, which are wholly devoted to the praise of death, he fitted them into the schematism of the two-type theory: They represent the pious attitude which exalts the hereafter, in contrast to the pessimism of the Antef-Neferhotep class of song which urges enjoyment of life while it lasts.[23]

To sum up the main viewpoints which we have encountered in our review: The songs of the harpers have been interpreted as: (1) secular drinking songs developing a "make-merry" motif combined with a reminder of death; (2) mortuary songs derived from secular drinking songs and fitted to religious belief and practice; (3) secular drinking songs of skeptic-heretical bent; and (4) funerary laments born of skepticism. Finally, they have been divided into two classes, one skeptic, pessimistic, and primarily secular; the other pious, optimistic, and primarily funerary.

[19] *The Dawn of Conscience*, p. 165.

[20] *PSBA*, XXXV (1913), 165–70.

[21] *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, translated into English by A. M. Blackman, p. 253.

[22] *ZÄS*, LXII (1927), 77; also *Totenglauben*, p. 451.

[23] *BIFAO*, XXXV (1935), 153–60. See also Weill, *Egyptian Religion*, III (1935), 127.

## II. THE ORCHESTRA SONGS OF THE EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE AS PART OF THE DECORATED TOMB

The seemingly simple term "harper's song" for a song accompanied by the harp is ambiguous; for it neither includes, nor outrightly bars admittance to, the many little songs recorded chiefly in private tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty which are either sung in unison by several musicians playing various instruments of which the harp is one or divided among the different musicians, each singing his part. On the whole, these little songs have been excluded from the discussion of harpers' songs and have not been looked upon as possibly having a bearing on the question of origin, purpose, and content of those songs which are recorded with the figure of a single harpist or attributed to a harpist by means of an introductory phrase and which alone have come to be known as "harpers' songs."

In this section we propose to deal with these short songs from Eighteenth Dynasty tombs, and we shall call them "orchestra songs" as distinct from "harpers' songs." We shall discuss them from two angles: (1) their literary affinities and (2) their pictorial context. When their place in the scheme of the decorated tomb has thus been outlined it will be possible to define their relation to "harpers' songs."

A scene in the hall of the tomb of Ḳenamun (No. 93 at Thebes; north side of west wall) shows Amenhotep II as a young prince sitting on the lap of the royal nurse Amenemopet, who is Ḳena-

mun's mother.[24] Two officials approach him and are followed by two girls carrying wine cups and a third playing a lute. The legend above the girls reads:

Diverting the heart and seeing good things, song, dance, and music; rejoicing and gladness of heart when [the troupe of] his majesty is seen in the pleasure-ground of Peru-nufer; perfumed with myrrh, anointed with oil, making holiday (*ỉrt hrw nfr*); decked with garlands from thy plantation, lotus at thy nostril, O king Amenhotep. Make for us an eternity of [years]. How fair is thy face in royal appearance when thou art seated on the great throne. . . . . He who rejoices over Re when he sees him has life so that he does not [die].

This representation of the entertainments provided for the young prince is a purely secular scene, free from all funerary allusions. Both picture and text invoke the *hrw nfr*, the "holiday" or "feast day," with its standard paraphernalia of wine, music, flowers, and ointment. Secular as the occasion is, the gods are not forgotten, for they are the bestowers of all life and happiness.

In the following we shall study the application of that same "make-holiday" phraseology to a funerary[25] context, i.e., to wishes for, and descriptions of, the life after death. The setting for these texts is either the simple daily meal of the dead, the "offering-table" scene, or the more elaborate "banquet" scene, the significance of which we shall discuss later.

*a*) The banquet scene in the hall of the tomb of Ipuki and Nebamun (No. 181 at Thebes; west side of south wall)[26] shows the deceased Nebamun being presented with drink by his wife, who says: "Take, drink, and make holiday within thy house of eternity!" Above the man's head is written:

Sitting down to divert the heart by a holiday in the interior of his house of the west, his abode of eternity, which is in the precinct of Hathor, mistress of Djesrut. May she give thee leave to come up to earth and to the open forecourt of the tomb so that thou mayest see the sun when he rises.

*b*) In the banquet scene from the tomb of Amenhotep-si-se (No. 75 at Thebes; main hall; west side of north wall)[27] the master and his wife are seated in front of the offering table with musicians and guests attending. The legend above the man's head reads:

Sitting down in the hall to divert the heart according to the practice of existence on earth, perfumed with myrrh, adorned with garlands, making [holiday] in his house of justification which he made for himself in the west of Thebes.

*c*) The tomb of Nebamun (No. 90 at Thebes)[28] contains two parallel banquet scenes on the east wall of the hall, in both of which the deceased is seated with his wife and receives the cup from a daughter. In the south scene the daughter addresses her father thus: "For thy ka! In life, in health, thou praised of Amun, in thy beautiful house of eternity, thy dwelling of everlastingness." The legend above his head in the north scene reads:

Diverting the heart and passing a happy moment in [his] beautiful [house] of eternity by the one ——— of favor, great in the palace; he is happier today than yesterday.

*d*) In one of the two banquet scenes in the tomb of Haremhab (No. 78 at Thebes; main hall)[29] two women present cups to

[24] See Davies, *The Tomb of Ken-Amūn at Thebes*, Pl. IX.

[25] The term "funerary" as used here does not apply to every inscription or representation recorded in a tomb but only to those dealing with the burial rites or with the life after death.

[26] Davies, *The Tomb of Two Sculptors at Thebes*, Pls. V–VI.

[27] Davies, *The Tombs of Two Officials*, Pls. IV, V, XVIII.

[28] *Ibid.*, Pls. XX–XXIII.

[29] Bouriant, *Mémoires de la Mission Française*, Vol. V, Fasc. III, Pl. I.

the deceased. Behind them are three women musicians. The legend above the two serving women reads:

For thy ka! Make holiday in thy beautiful house of eternity, thy dwelling of everlastingness. Thy face is turned to ——— Re, thy lord who loves thee. . . . . Receive garlands, anoint thyself with fine oil. Take part in a holiday in the favor of that good god of the west of Thebes.

*e*) Two parallel scenes on the north and south walls of his shrine depict the deceased User (owner of tomb No. 21 at Thebes)[30] seated with his wife in front of the offering table. A daughter presents the cup and says:

For thy ka! Drink, be happily drunken, and make holiday! . . . . Thou shalt never cease to enjoy thyself within thy beautiful house.

These samples should suffice to make it clear that there exists a certain class of tomb texts which apply the "make-holiday" motif to the deceased's existence in the hereafter. The texts name the tomb as the place in which the dead man will enjoy the "holiday"—"house of eternity" and "house of justification" are, in this context, quite unambiguous terms for the tomb—and the feasting which is the chief content of the "holiday" is described and depicted in the manner of the feasts actually celebrated in life. Thus a secular phraseology is consciously applied to strictly funerary wishes, which conjure up the happiness of the life after death by picturing it in terms of earthly joys.

So far the "holiday" has been invoked through speeches of those participating in the feasting or through descriptive legends. It remains to be seen how the orchestra songs recorded with the banquet scenes compare with these two forms of prose.

*a*) In the banquet scene from the tomb of Djeserkerasonb (No. 38 at Thebes; main hall)[31] the master and his wife sit in front of a flower stand. Two daughters present flowers and drink. Behind them are seven women musicians and a dancing girl. The daughters express the familiar good wish: "For thy ka! Make holiday, O scribe of the grain, in thy house of justification, which thou hast made for thyself on the side of the City." As in the case of Amenhotep-si-se, the feasting in the hereafter is expressly stated to be a replica of the earthly custom; for the legend above the seated pair reads: "Sitting down in the hall to divert the heart as was his wont while being on earth." As to the song of the musicians who play harp, lute, double-flute, and lyre, it runs thus:

Holiday! One constantly recalls the beauty of [Amun]. The heart is glad and praise is given to the height of heaven unto thy exalted face. Hearts say at the sight of it: Do it, O measurer of the grain [of Amun], every day!

*b*) In the banquet of Rekhmire (tomb No. 100 at Thebes; north wall of passage)[32] two orchestras, one consisting of men, the other of women, entertain the large gathering of feasters. The songs are divided among the various musicians, each singing a part. The male harper sings:

How prosperous are they, these years which the god decrees for thee! Thou passest them endued with blessing, healthy and happy. Thou existest, thy voice being justified and thine enemy fallen, in thy house united with eternity, partaking of everlastingness.

The lute player sings:

Thou hast life endued with blessing, thou hast holiday . . . . making holiday, O prefect. Thy goodness is remembered. . . . .

[30] Davies, *Five Theban Tombs*, Pls. XXV–XXVI.

[31] Scheil, *Mémoires de la Mission Française*, V, 571–79, Pl. II. For the texts see *BIFAO*, XXI, 128.

[32] Virey, *Mémoires de la Mission Française*, Vol. V, Fasc. I, Pls. XL–XLIII; Davies, *The Tomb of Rekh-mi-Rēʿ at Thebes*, Pl. LXVI and p. 61.

The three men who beat the rhythm sing:

North wind sweet to thy nostril, breath of what thy nose loveth. Partake of the offering which the king gives which has gone up on the altar of the lord of eternity, that thy ka may be satisfied by it, O prefect blessed of Amun.

*c*) Some painted blocks from a Saqqara tomb of the late Eighteenth Dynasty[33] show a group of four women musicians, one of them a harpist, standing behind a girl who presents drink to the deceased, who is seated beside his wife. Above the musicians is written:

Thy ka is upon thee, thou who hast spent thy lifetime in happiness, (though now) thou art consigned to the west. How prosperous are thy (things), O lord of eternity! . . . . Thy house stands firm bearing thy name. The children of thy children ⌜carry thy bier⌝.[34]

*d*) The arrangement of the figures in the banquet scene on Wall D of the hall in the tomb of Haremhab[35] is slightly different from that of the parallel scene previously described. In this scene the text does not end above the head of the second serving girl but continues above the two women lutists who stand behind them. Hence it is difficult to decide whether we are dealing with a speech or a song—or a combination of both. The text runs thus:

For thy ka! Make holiday in thy beautiful house of eternity, thy dwelling of everlastingness . . . . decked with garlands, anointed with fine oil, taking part in a holiday. Thy heart is glad, thy heart is in joy. Thou seest Amun; he accords thee to be among mankind, blessed in the land of the living. Mut has come . . . . in order to give ⌜what is asked of her⌝ and to carry the sistrum and mix the drink in the cup of gold. . . . .

In the lower register a male orchestra consisting of a harpist, a lutist, and a blind singer who beats the rhythm accompany the preparation of food with their song:

Incense, fine oil, oxen, the best of what belongs to Amun, the morning of his rising when he appears in Karnak to receive the good things which are received from the hand of the blessed royal scribe every day. To thy beautiful face, lord of food! thou hast reached the land of the god.

*e*) At a banquet in the tomb of Amenemhet (No. 82 at Thebes; north wall of passage)[36] a male harper sings:

How well it goes with the temple of Amun, even she that spendeth her days in festivity with the king of the gods within her ———. She is like to a [woman] drunken, who sitteth outside the chamber, with loosened ⌜hair⌝ and ——— upon her beauteous [⌜breast⌝], and she possesses ———.[37]

*f*) In another banquet scene from the same tomb (hall; south side of west wall)[38] a male harper and two women who beat the rhythm sing:

How well it goes with the temple of [Amun] on New Year's Day, at the renewal of ——— all in its entirety, when he receives its good things, and its oxen are slaughtered by hundreds, its wild game of the mountains by thousands, even for A[mun as his due off]erings at the festivals of the seasons.

*g*) The song from the banquet scene on the British Museum fragment No. 37984[39] runs thus:

[⌜Flowers of sweet⌝] odor ⌜given⌝ by Ptah and planted by Geb. His beauty is in every body. Ptah has made this with his hands to entertain his heart. The canals are filled with water anew, and the earth is flooded with his love.

[33] Quibell and Hayter, *Teti Pyramid North Side*, Pl. XV.

[34] For the word *šfd.t* see Davies and Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhet*, p. 56, and Peet, *The Great Tomb Robberies* (Text), p. 174.

[35] Bouriant, *Mémoires de la Mission Française*, Vol. V, Fasc. III, Pl. II, p. 426; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, I, 39*a*, *c*.

[36] Davies and Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhet*, Pl. XV, p. 63.

[37] This is Gardiner's translation except for the initial words, for which see Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, § 141, n. 6.

[38] Davies and Gardiner, *op. cit.*, Pl. V, pp. 40–41.

[39] See Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, I, 91; Davies and Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Paintings*, II, 70.

The comparison of these songs with the speeches and legends reveals their similarity. Sometimes it is only the position of the text in relation to the figures which marks the distinction between the song of the musician and the speech of the cupbearer. Whenever the text is not distinctly assigned to one or the other class of persons, we cannot be sure about the manner of its delivery—or rather about the intention of the decorator. We have encountered this ambiguity in the case of the banquet of Haremhab. However, a certain amount of difference between the songs and the prose texts is recognizable: The "holiday" motif, although it occurs, is not the chief subject of the songs. Instead, references to the gods and to the offering ceremonies are prominent. In other words, the orchestra songs are more ritualistic than the other banquet texts. In spite of this difference, however, it can be said in summary that all banquet texts, whether orchestra songs or speeches or descriptive legends, belong to the same basic repertoire the purpose of which is to invoke the pleasures of the "holiday" as they apply to the existence in the hereafter.

The nature and significance of the banquet scenes, from which our texts derive, have been much discussed, but no unity of opinion has been reached. Gardiner has distinguished between two types of banquets, the funerary and the biographical, the former being "the depiction of the funerary rites of offering together with the banquet that they aimed at securing for the deceased,"[40] while the latter is the representation of an earthly feast and thus a scene of daily life. The difficulty of distinguishing between the two types is, according to Gardiner, due to the fact that the worldly feast had acquired a secondary funerary and prospective significance owing to the Egyptian's hope that after death he would continue to enjoy earthly pleasures. This secondary significance caused the intrusion of funerary elements in the depiction of the secular biographical feast.

The fundamental distinction between these two types of banquets, the funerary and the biographical, has generally been adopted. But their respective meanings have been interpreted in various ways. An eloquent statement of one point of view, which is related to Gardiner's, is provided by Davies' interpretation of banquet scenes:

> We may gather from the pictures and accompanying texts that bright hours spent in the midst of family and friends might be looked forward to by the happy dead. But we should be much mistaken if we supposed that it was a prospect clearly envisaged and provided for by rite, by prayer, or by magical aids, pictorial or otherwise. . . . . Egyptian faith knew when to eschew system and dogma and pass to unoutlined dreams. . . . . The pictures, then, that we meet with in the outer halls of tombs do not definitely represent or secure such a reunion. . . . . The scenes are primarily memories of the part which the dead might enjoy beyond cavil, and hopes surpassing these are only disclosed by a phrase, an epithet, an exaggeration which, being scarcely applicable to life here, might be regarded as hyperbole or as prophecy. . . . . Such scenes of feasting occur more than once in different parts of one tomb, and a distinction needs to be made between them, even when the ancients failed to observe it and added elements of confusion. Three separate classes of banquets are perhaps depicted; one is the regular meal of the dead, which he would hope to enjoy daily, but which, for the common man at least, could only be so provided pictorially or by written spell. . . . . The second depiction reflects an actual presentation of food and a real assembly of living relatives on the occasion of the New Year, or some

[40] Davies and Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhet*, p. 38.

other anniversary. Here, too, the food was ritually offered to the dead; not in privacy and silence, however, but in the company of friends and to music and laughter. The third kind of meal is such as we are now to consider. Placed in the chamber of records it commemorates primarily the pleasures of the past. No priest needs to intervene here. . . . . The daughters of the house come forward with the cup, the garland, the ointment, the joy bringing emblems of Hathor. . . . . The meat and drink are material things . . . . and if they are offered to the *ka*, that *anima blandula* was a familiar spirit that began its protective or other offices with birth not death. The distinction between these occasions of feasting was, however, not observed strictly by the decorators. The actions and words proper to the one crept often into the other. The shadow of death naturally stole over the happiness of earth; on the other hand the familiar realities of the known world pleasantly tinged the monotonous expanse of eternity. With this word of warning against too rigid an interpretation of words and details, we may turn to the picture itself and enjoy its very incongruities.[41]

We are not in agreement with this point of view. In the first place, the banquet which Davies treats as an example of the worldly biographical type contains the explicitly funerary legends which we have discussed.[42] Refusal to accept the literal meaning of those "holiday" wishes which place the "holiday" squarely in the hereafter could be justified only if they were isolated remarks cropping up erratically in an otherwise distinctly worldly context, but not when they are so persistently used and echoed in song and prose as to constitute a definable part of the funerary repertoire. Moreover, all the banquets from which the funerary "holiday" texts derive exhibit one or more than one funerary element of representation, usually the ritual offering table. This is also the case in the banquet of Nebamun with which Davies deals. To quote from Davies' description: "The ridiculous truncheon which he [Nebamun] carries, against all earthly habit, gives a sepulchral heaviness little befitting the scene." Describing the relatives participating in the feast, Davies says:

> In the uppermost row a young woman offers the menat and symbolical flowers to a married pair, and by this attention betrays a rank which they had probably won by age or death. . . . . Both are given the epithet *makheru* commonly applied to the dead, and in agreement with this their table is of the form reserved for mortuary feasts.[43]

Has Nebamun then invited the dead to his house?

It seems to us entirely unconvincing to assume that all these funerary texts and elements of representation are out of place and merely the outcome of confusion. In other words, we believe that a banquet which has explicitly funerary legends is a funerary banquet. When the presence or absence of such legends is made the criterion for the distinction of the funerary from the worldly biographical banquet, it becomes apparent that the overwhelming majority of banquets in tombs belongs to the funerary class. Such literal approach to the material may be rigid but is not arbitrary. It furthermore results that all texts gathered in this chapter, legends, speeches, and songs, with the exception of the legend from the "holiday" scene of Amenhotep II,[44] which was chosen as an example of a secular entertainment, derive from strictly funerary feasts. In other words, the background for the orchestra songs recorded in the private tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty is the funerary banquet.

It remains to inquire into the meaning

[41] *The Tomb of Two Sculptors at Thebes*, pp. 51–53.

[42] See above, p. 182 (tomb of Ipuki and Nebamun).

[43] *The Tomb of Two Sculptors at Thebes*, p. 55.

[44] See above, p. 181 (tomb of Ḳenamun).

of the funerary banquet. It is commonly assumed that this banquet represents a family celebration which took place in the tomb on certain days of the year for the purpose of offering food to the deceased with which to satisfy his needs in the hereafter. However, another possibility is suggested in a recent study in which it is maintained that, besides the biographical banquet, there exist two different kinds of funerary banquet scenes, the one being the depiction of what a chapter of the Coffin Texts describes as the reunion of a man with his family in the hereafter,[45] while the other represents the constitution of the mortuary endowment.[46] Foucart's study which was to furnish the evidence for this view is not available, hence we are in no position to comment on it. But it seems desirable, pending a solution, to indicate the problems posed by the funerary banquet scenes.

Summing up, it seems to us that the orchestra songs of the Eighteenth Dynasty are part of a certain class of tomb literature which is devoted to invoking the holiday to be enjoyed in the hereafter, to praising the lasting and vigorous life which the deceased will lead in the beyond, and to extolling the gods. These songs occur in scenes of funerary feasting or with the simple daily meal of the dead. They can be found in any of the accessible parts of the tomb, the hall, the passage, or the shrine. Their peculiar character is that they are funerary without being strictly ritual and that they make use of a secular phraseology without being secular or biographical. In other words, they are not in the nature of spells, as are those texts which deal with the burial ceremonies proper or with the deceased's journey into the beyond, nor do they represent biographical reminiscences. Their phraseology is to a large extent derived from secular speech, but their purpose is funerary throughout. This transposition of secular terms to funerary purposes is particularly clear in the case of the "holiday" motif.

Against the background of the orchestra songs we shall now view the compositions which are harpers' songs in the narrower sense, beginning with those which antedate the New Kingdom.

## III. THE HARPERS' SONGS OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM AND THE DEPICTION OF HARPERS

Old Kingdom representations of harpers are numerous, but with the exception of one Sixth Dynasty tomb at Meir[47] their songs are never recorded. The contexts in which they appear are varied and not well defined Usually a harper and a few other musicians are tucked away in a corner among scenes of agriculture or domestic labor. Sometimes a row of dancers is depicted in the vicinity of the musicians. These scenes are not explicit. They merely indicate that the harpers were part of the nobleman's household. Women harpists appear as early as men; and playing the harp is not only a paid profession but an art with which a lady might entertain her husband.[48]

In the Middle Kingdom the reliefs suggest that the function of the harpers is primarily funerary. They now appear in the funerary offering-table scene on the private mortuary stelae, and in the tombs, too, they are more closely connected with ritual scenes. This funerary function is

[45] See De Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, II, 180 (Spell 146) and *ibid.*, II, 151 (Spell 131); also Lacau, *Textes religieux*, II and LXXII. Perhaps this is represented in the banquet of Amenemhet which depicts the dead ancestors (see Davies and Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhet*, Pl. XVI).

[46] Foucart, "Le Tombeau D'Amonmos" in *Mémoires de l'Institut Français*, LVII, 225, n. 2.

[47] Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir*, Vol. IV, Pls. IX–X.

[48] See *The Mastaba of Mereruka*, Vol. I, Pls. 94–95 ("O.I.P.," Vol. XXXI).

borne out by the character of the harpers' songs, for which we now have several examples.

Before discussing these texts, a word should be said about a peculiarity of representation, namely, the habit of depicting male harpers as blind. This mode of representation is fairly common in the Middle Kingdom and very widely applied in the New Kingdom. Knowledge of the social standing of harpers would help to determine the reasons behind this practice. But we have little information about the harper's profession and his standing. Max Müller has made much of the demotic satirical poem which describes him as lowly and despicable.[49] But, being meant as a satire, that description has little informative value. What evidence we have would indicate that there were the honored and well paid as well as the humble and poor.[50] If we assume that the representation of harpers as blind was based on observed reality—blind men would be likely to turn to the musical profession as the most adequate means of livelihood—we would have to ask ourselves whether this constitutes a departure from the tendency prevailing in Egyptian art to omit from the depiction any physical deformity of the model. The answer to this might be that this tendency does not necessarily apply to the minor personages who appear on another man's monument.[51] It has been suggested that blind harpers were welcome because they could not see the women of the house.[52] However, if that were the case, one may wonder why other musicians, such as flutists and lutists, are not depicted as blind. Furthermore, if such practical consideration had been so important as to dominate the mode of representation, it is surprising that it should not have been reflected in the very numerous Old Kingdom depictions of harpers but that it should have been left for the more refined Middle Kingdom to emphasize such primitive precautions.[53] Whatever the origin of the practice, it is likely that in the course of time it became an artistic formula of characterization and, as such, independent of observed reality or of a specific meaning.

The harpers' songs of the Middle Kingdom, by which we understand songs recorded on monuments dating from the Middle Kingdom, come from private tombs as well as from funerary stelae. Their number is small, and they are short and simple compositions. We possess the following:

1. Stela in Cairo from Abydos
2. Leyden Stela V 68
3. Leyden Stela V 71
4. Tomb of Senbi at Meir
5. Tomb of Antefoḳer, No. 60 at Thebes[54]

The Cairo stela from Abydos is a simple round-topped one with the customary pair of magic eyes near the top.[55] Under them in horizontal lines is the text. In the left corner the deceased sits at the offering table. In front of him the harper squats on the ground. This is the song:

(1) The singer Tjeniaa says:
How abiding art thou[a] in thy abode (2) of eternity,

[49] Müller, *Die Liebespoesie der alten Aegypter*, p. 2.

[50] For a royal harpist see Kuentz, *Recueil Champollion*, pp. 602–10.

[51] When the owner of a tomb himself is depicted in all his deformity, it surely represents an exception and must be due to his personal insistence. See, for instance, the Cairo statue of the dwarf Senb and the reliefs in his tomb; the latter are published in *Anzeiger der Kaiserl. Akad. der Wissenschaften* (Wien), Vol. LXIV (1927), Pl. V.

[52] Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir*, II, 12–13.

[53] For the truly barbaric custom of blinding the harpers, practiced by some of Egypt's African neighbors, see Roscoe, *The Baganda*, p. 35.

[54] The songs from this tomb have not been included in this collection, for they are very fragmentary and obscure. The reader is referred to the tomb publication: Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoker*.

[55] Peet, *The Cemeteries of Abydos*, Vol. II, Pl. XXIII, 5. Sethe, *Aegyptische Lesestücke*, p. 87. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, p. 421.

In thy tomb of everlastingness!
It is (3) filled with offerings of food,[b]
It contains every (4) good thing
Thy ka is with thee,[c]
It does not part from thee,[d]
O chancellor of the King of Lower Egypt,
Great steward (5) Nebankh,
Thou hast sweet breath of the north wind.
(6) So says his singer who keeps his name alive,
(7) The praised one, the singer Tjeniaa,
(8) Whom we loved,
Who sings to his ka every day.[56]

[a] *mnt.wy tw* apparently stands for *mn.wy tw*.

[b] *ḥtp.w.t ḏf3.w* can be a compound term meaning "food-offering," so in Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynasty* (hereafter cited as *"Urk. IV"*), pp. 227, 112, 467, and in Louvre C 1. But it can also represent two parallel terms as in *ḫ3 m ḥtp.w.t ḫ3 m ḏf3.w*, Louvre A 134 (*PSBA*, XXII, 35).

[c] *k3.k ḥnᶜ.k* is a well-known funerary formula; see, e.g. *Urk. IV*, pp. 499 and 1222; parallel to *ib.k n.k* in Sethe, *Die altägyptischen Pyramidentexte* (hereafter cited as *Pyr.*), § 1869, *a*.

[d] The negation is intended. For *tšî r* see *Urk. IV*, p. 38.

This song is a distinctly funerary composition which exhibits some of the typical mortuary commonplaces, such as the offering of food and other good things, the presence of the ka, the sweet breath of the north wind, and the perpetuation of the name. With the essential safeguards for survival thus named, the song is no less efficacious than the *ḥtp-dî-nśw.t* formula of offering which it has replaced on this stela. In other words, instead of using the stereotyped offering formula, this stela fulfils its funerary function by means of a more original composition. And the greater freedom of content is supplemented by a more intimate form of delivery: it is the song of a harper directly addressing his dead master and not the impersonal offering formula which can be spoken by any stranger passing the monument. The praise of the tomb, with which the song begins, is a distinctive feature not common for the funerary stela but recurring in another harper's song from the stela next to be considered.

Leyden V 68[57] is a stela in form of a door which is divided into three registers. In the upper register the deceased is seated at the offering table. His wife stands behind him, and an exceedingly fat harper squats in front of him. Above the heads of man and wife is the *ḥtp-dî-nśw.t* prayer and the names of the pair. In front of and above the harper is his song. In the two lower registers sons bring offerings. The harper's song is quite laconic:

(1) O tomb, thou hast been built for festivity,
(2) Thou hast been founded (3) for goodliness!
(4) The singer Neferhotep born of Henu.

The similarity between the two songs is obvious. Both texts occur in the simple offering-table scene and are purely funerary. But whereas the harper's song was the only text on the Cairo stela and had replaced the offering formula, the Leyden stela has a separate offering text and also depicts the presentation of food by members of the family. Hence the harper with his song is an additional nicety rather than a necessity. It is also noteworthy that in the praise of the tomb, which is the theme of the song, it is the tomb, and not the deceased, which is directly addressed.

Leyden V 71[58] is a large family stela with a small and inconspicuous harper and a harper's text which seems to have escaped attention. In the upper half of the stela two couples facing each other are seated at a central offering table.

[56] The numbers in parentheses refer to the lines of the text, the superior letters to our notes on the translation.

[57] Boeser, *Beschreibung der aegyptischen Sammlung . . . in Leiden*, II, 33; Sethe, *Aegyptische Lesestücke*, p. 87; Steindorff, *ZÄS*, XXXII, 123.

[58] Boeser, *Beschreibung der aegyptischen Sammlung . . . . in Leiden*, II, 9. It is numbered "V 3" in Boeser's bibliography, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

Above their heads are their respective offering prayers, names, and titles. The lower half is divided into two registers filled with numerous small figures of family members and priests performing offering rites. Among them, in the left corner of the bottom register, squats the harper in front of a heap of food. Above the heap in four vertical semi-hieratic columns, is his song (see Pls. IV, *b* and VI, *b*):[59]

(1) O Osiris this Siese,[a] awake thou![b]
Geb has brought thee Horus,
(2) And he recognizes thee,
Horus has found thee,
<And it is beneficial> to him through <thee>
(3) In thy name of ⌜"He who awakes well,"⌝[c]
Great Steward Siese, justified!
(4) The singer Iker born[d] of *S3.t-ḥnt-ḫty-ḥtp*.

[a] The deceased Siese, whom the harper addresses, is the chief personage of the stela.

[b] The whole text is based on *Pyr.* § 612, *a–b*.

[c] Apparently *m rn.k n rś wḏ3*.

[d] The mistake *ir.t.n* for *ir.n* also occurs in one of the texts in the upper half of the stela.

This text, too, is a simple funerary prayer for the benefit of the deceased. It differs from the preceding harpers' songs inasmuch as it is an adaptation of a pyramid text and not an independent composition.

In the tombs of the Middle Kingdom representations of harpers are not uncommon, but their songs are very rarely recorded.[60] The harper's song in the tomb of Senbi at Meir occurs in a scene which Blackman has described as a Hathor ceremony:

Senbi the justified stands facing a company of musicians, male and female dancers, and wrestlers, arranged in two lines and headed by the steward Khnum and a harper. Khnum is offering his master a gorgeous necklace appropriate to the ceremony and festivities in which he is about to participate. . . . . The dancing girls ere they begin to dance, and while the harper sings the opening song . . . . hold out toward Senbi their menats and sistrums. "For thy kas!" says the first, "the menats of Hathor."[61]

The harper's song is as follows:

Exalted is Hathor (goddess) of Love, O Iḥuyu, O Iḥuyu,
When she is exalted on the holiday, O Iḥuyu,
On the holiday, O Senbi, O Iḥuyu![62]

This harper's song is a ceremonial hymn. As such it is related to the hymns recorded in the Eighteenth Dynasty banquet scenes and also to the hymns inscribed on temple walls.[63] On both occasions—the banquet of the private tomb and the temple ceremony—it is usual that there should be dancing in addition to the music. This is also the case in our relief from the tomb of Senbi, which depicts a group of dancers and three singers in addition to the harper. Senbi's harper thus occupies a minor position, reminiscent of the harpers in the banquet scenes of the New Kingdom tombs. It can therefore be said that this harper's song is on the

[59] With the exception of the Song of Piay, the original disposition and appearance of the hieroglyphs have not been retained in our hand copies.

[60] Middle Kingdom tombs depicting harpers are:

I. Meir:
1. Tomb of Wahhotep (Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir*, Vol. II, Pls. XV, XXXII, 3), west wall, with two short very damaged lines of text
2. Same tomb; north wall (*ibid.*, Pls. III, XXI, XXII)

II. Beni Hassan
1. Tomb of Amenemhet (Newberry, *Beni Hassan*, Vol. I, Pl. XII)
2. Tomb of Baqt (*ibid.*, Vol. II, Pl. IV)
3. Tomb of Khety (*ibid.*, Pl. XIV)

[61] *The Rock Tombs of Meir*, I, 22–23, Pls. II–III.

[62] The wording is rather obscure, and the translation, which is Blackman's, is by no means certain. The word *wȧr* presents a problem, and so does *iḫwyw*, which, according to Blackman, refers to the two men with castanets who also appear in the tomb of Amenemhet (see Davies and Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhet*, Pls. XIX–XX). See also Peet, *JEA*, VI, 57.

[63] Harpers' hymns on temple walls form a class apart inasmuch as, being part of the temple ceremonies, they are not connected with, and not addressed to, private individuals. They have not been included in this study.

border line between harpers' songs in the strict sense and orchestra songs.

Summarizing the character of the harpers' songs of the Middle Kingdom, we would say that they are of two kinds. Those on mortuary stelae are funerary, invoking the dead and the hereafter. Those in private tombs either are ceremonial hymns which may or may not have funerary implications[64] (tomb of Senbi; also tomb of Antefoḳer)[65] or are purely funerary invocations and thus in line with those on mortuary stelae (tomb of Antefoḳer).[66] Where Middle Kingdom stelae depict harpers without recording their songs, the standard funerary representation of the offering-table scene leaves no doubt as to the funerary function of the harper.[67]

On the pseudo-stela, Louvre C 17,[68] the mortuary banquet is represented: A female orchestra of one harpist and three singers and a dancing girl provide the entertainment to the meal which is attended by guests. This scene recalls the banquets from the tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty. And a transition to these New Kingdom banquets, foreshadowed by this relief, is provided by the tomb of Sebeknekht at Elkab, which dates from the Second Intermediate Period and which depicts an orchestra singing a "holiday" song.[69]

It results that the Middle Kingdom records of harpers and their songs reveal, on the one hand, an established tradition of funerary and ceremonial harpers' songs and, on the other hand, point forward to the development of the orchestra song, which becomes a prominent feature of the banquet scenes of the New Kingdom. What we lack completely is any trace or echo on any Middle Kingdom monument of the famous worldly and hedonistic Antef song, believed to be a Middle Kingdom composition.

## IV. THE HARPERS' SONGS OF THE NEW KINGDOM

The harper's text known as the song from the tomb of King Antef exists in two copies, both of which date from the New Kingdom: Papyrus Harris 500, which gives the complete text, is a Nineteenth Dynasty manuscript, and the fragmentary copy in the Memphite tomb of Paatenemheb, now in Leyden, belongs to the Amarna period. Nevertheless, the song is usually believed to be a Middle Kingdom composition. The reasons for this belief can be stated as follows: (1) The introduction, extant in the papyrus copy, relates that the song was recorded "in the house of King Antef." This king must be one of the Antefs of the Eleventh or of the Seventeenth Dynasty. (2) The language is classical Middle Egyptian. (3) The pessimistic tone of the song suggests its relation to a skeptic-pessimistic movement resulting from the upheaval of the First Intermediate Period and reflected in a number of Middle Kingdom compositions such as the "Dialogue of the Man Weary of Life."

The evidence, indeed, points to a Middle Kingdom origin. However, as already indicated, no Middle Kingdom monument or record reveals a trace of the song. Instead, it has come down to us in the two New Kingdom copies. Furthermore, and this is most important, it is the New King-

[64] According to Blackman (*The Rock Tombs of Meir*, I, 25, n. 6), the Hathor ceremony from the tomb of Senbi has funerary significance; according to Gardiner (Davies and Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhet*, p. 96), the scene refers to the annual Hathor festival as celebrated during the tomb-owner's life.

[65] Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoḳer*, Pl. XXIX, p. 24.

[66] *Ibid.* Pl. XXVII, pp. 24–25.

[67] See Cairo stelae Nos. 20121, 20257, 20732 (Lange and Schäfer, *Grab- und Denksteine des mittleren Reiches*).

[68] Boreux, *BIFAO*, XXX (1930), 45, Pls. I–III.

[69] Tylor, *The Tomb of Sebeknekht*, Pls. VIII–IX.

dom which furnishes a number of harpers' songs which are closely related to the Antef song. These are good indications not only that the song was popular in the New Kingdom but that it actually started a literary fashion. And it is in order to point to its literary affinities with the New Kingdom, and not in order to deny its Middle Kingdom origin, that we have placed the Antef song at the head of our list of harpers' songs of the New Kingdom. These are the texts:

1. The Antef Song: Papyrus Harris 500 and Tomb of Paatenemheb
2. Song from the Tomb of Neferhotep, Thebes No. 50, north wall of passage; hereafter called "Neferhotep I" (Pl. VII)
3. Song from the Tomb of Neferhotep, Thebes No. 50, left rear wall of hall; hereafter called "Neferhotep II"
4. Song from the Tomb of Neferhotep, Thebes No. 50, left rear wall of hall; following on Neferhotep II; hereafter called "Neferhotep III" (Pls. I, II)
5. Song from the Tomb of Khai-Inheret, Der el Medineh No. 359, second chamber
6. Song from the Tomb of Paser, Thebes No. 106, on pillar in hall (Pls. III, V)
7. Song from the Tomb of Piay, Thebes No. 263, left door reveal (Pls. IV*a*, VI*a*)
8. Song from the Tomb of Neferrenpet, Thebes No. 178, south wall of hall
9. Song from the Tomb of Penniut, Thebes No. 331, left door reveal
10. Song from the Tomb of Tjanefer, Thebes No. 158, left door reveal[70]

### 1. THE ANTEF SONG

The text occupies columns VI, 2, to VII, 3, of Papyrus Harris 500 (*Brit. Mus. Pap.*, No. 10060) and also exists, in a fragmentary state, in the tomb of Paatenemheb from Saqqara, now in Leyden. The tomb copy was engraved on the right-hand wall of the hall above the heads of an officiating priest and a group of four musicians led by a blind harpist. They face the deceased and his wife, who are seated at the offering table. The tomb dates from the reign of Amenhotep IV, Akhenaten. This is the song:

(2) Song which is in the house[a] of King Antef the justified
(And) which is in front of the (3) harpist.
Flourishing indeed[b] is this good lord!
A kindly fate has come to pass.[c]
(One) generation passes away
And others (4) remain (in its place)
Since the time of the ancestors.
The gods that were aforetime
Rest in their pyramids;
Nobles (5) and glorified likewise
Are buried in their pyramids.
They that built houses,
Their places are no more;
What[d] (6) has been done with them?
I have heard the sayings of Imhotep and Djedefhor,[e]
With whose words men (still) speak (7) so much;[f]
What are their places?
Their walls have crumbled,
Their places are no more,
As if they had never (8) been.
None cometh from thence[g]
That he might tell their circumstances,
That he might tell their needs
And content our heart
Until we have reached (9) the place
Whither they have gone.
May thy heart be cheerful
To permit the heart to forget
The making of (funerary) services for thee.
Follow thy desire while thou livest!
(10) Put myrrh upon thy head,
Clothe thyself in fine linen,
Anoint thee with the genuine wonders
(11) Which are the god's own.
Increase yet more thy happiness,
And let not thy heart languish;[h]
Follow thy desire and thy good,
(12) Fashion thine affairs on earth
After the command of thy heart.[i]

[70] For the bibliography of these songs see the Appendix.

That day of lamentation will come to thee,
When the Still (1) of Heart does not hear their lamentation,
And mourning does not deliver a man from the netherworld.[j]
⌜Refrain⌝:[k] (2) Make holiday!
Do not weary thereof!
Lo, none is allowed to take his goods with him,[l]
Lo, none that has gone has (3) come back!

[a] The "house of King Antef" is, of course, the royal tomb.

[b] *w³ḏ pw:* the writing is clearly *w³ḏ*, and the meaning of *w³ḏ* suits the context. The dead are often referred to as being flourishing and prosperous, cf. *w³ḏ.wy nn ḫpr n.f* (Davies, *The Tomb of Neferhotep at Thebes*, Pl. XXIII); *w³ḏ.wy st n³ n rnp.w.t wḏ ntr ḥr.k* (Virey, *Le Tombeau de Rekhmara, Mémoires de la Mission Française*, Vol. V, Pl. XLII with *wḏ* for *w³ḏ;* see also *Leyden Hymn to Amon*, VI, 10 (*ZÄS*, XLII, 41).

[c] *š³w nfr ḥḏy: š³w nfr* clearly is a euphemism for death, but *ḥḏy* presents a problem, since no satisfactory meaning can be obtained from it. We have adopted the attitude of previous translators who have treated it as a corruption and substituted *ḫpr* from the parallel phrase in Neferhotep I, line 2.

[d] *ptr* here and in line 7 seems to be the interrogative pronoun "what" rather than the imperative "behold," despite the wrong determinative in the first occurrence; so also Sethe, *Imhotep der Asklepios der Aegypter*, p. 10 (*Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Aegyptens*, II, 4).

[e] The recently published fragment of the teachings of Djedefhor (Brunner-Traut, *ZÄS*, LXXVI, 3–9) perhaps suggests that the two Old Kingdom sages are introduced here not merely because of their general fame but because of a more specific connection between their teachings and the musings of the harper. For the Djedefhor fragment recommends the traditional provisions for survival: "Make excellent thy dwelling place of the west . . . . the house of death is for life." The harper, however, reflects on the vanity of these efforts. See *ibid.*, p. 7, on the reading "Djedefhor" instead of previous "Hordedef." On the two wise men see also Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum* (3d ser.), Vol. I: *Text*, pp. 39–40.

[f] Or "words related as their own utterances—very much."

[g] Apparently for *bw iỉ.tw*. The Leyden variant *bn iỉ ỉm*, "nonexistent is one who comes from thence," is better.

[h] *ỉmỉ ḫ³w nfr.w.k*, etc. The usual procedure is to interpolate the preposition *ḥr* after *ḫ³w* and the negative imperative *m* before *b³g³y*. Both emendations are based on the Leyden text; see also Neferhotep I, line 28.

[i] *m wḏ ỉb.k ỉw n.k ḥrw*, etc. The Leyden text has *m ḥḏ ỉb.k r ỉw n.k ḥrw*. Both readings provide an adequate meaning. When the reading *wḏ* of Harris 500 as against *ḥd* of Leyden is retained, the phrase "after the command of thy heart" is the conclusion of the preceding sentence; and then the interpolation of the preposition *r* before *ỉw n.k* to obtain the meaning "until that day of lamentation comes to thee" is unwarranted.

[j] The Leyden text gives the correct reading for this phrase.

[k] The *Wörterbuch* (Erman and Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*) has adopted the translation "refrain" for *m³wt*, basing it on *m³wt.f m ḫ³t.f* of *P. med. London*, 16, 4; 17, 5; 18, 5, 11; but it remains guesswork.

[l] A very similar saying is *šm s šm ḫt.f*, "when man goes his belongings go" (Lefèbvre, *Le Tombeau de Petosiris*, II, 90).

The opening phrase of the song has a twofold intention. On the one hand, it is a simple statement of the fact that the person in whose honor the harper sings is dead; on the other hand, it is an affirmation, made with exclamatory emphasis, that the state of death is one of prosperity and happiness. As indicated by the parallels quoted above, the terms "to flourish" and "to be happy" are commonly applied to the dead man's existence in the hereafter, and the exclamatory form is often used as a greeting extended to the dead upon his arrival in the beyond.

The theme of death having thus been introduced is now further elaborated: The singer points to the transitoriness to which all life is subject, and this, in turn, leads him to observe that all-embracing

death treats kings and commoners alike; for both "lie buried in their pyramids."

At this point a new line of thought begins. Death, first viewed positively and described objectively, suddenly becomes the object of anxious questions and laments. Confidence and tranquillity are replaced by doubt and disbelief. What traces do men leave on earth, and how do they fare once they are dead? "They leave nó trace at all," is the answer; and of their existence beyond the grave nothing is known, for none has ever come back to report. Now, then, if complete oblivion is man's fate, it is best to forget all sadness and enjoy to the full the pleasures of life. Make the best of all good things, for you cannot take them with you; nor can you return once you are gone.

This, then, is the famous skepticism of the song and its equally famous *carpe diem* message. The surprise to find such a skeptic and hedonistic attitude among the world's most religious people has, *inter alia*, led the commentators to a diligent collecting of parallels from the literatures of other nations in order to demonstrate that what the Egyptians express here is, after all, a very natural and common state of mind. Doubts or disbelief regarding immortality will easily engender a hedonistic philosophy of life. Ecclesiastes, Anacreon, Horace, Omar Khayyam, and others are called upon to furnish examples of this attitude.

These comparisons, however, do not account for the circumstances which surround the conception and the recording of this song and similar harpers' songs and which are not easily paralleled by anything we find in other literatures. But it is precisely these peculiar circumstances which need to be investigated, for they alone explain the difficulties and paradoxes as well as the specific flavor of these compositions.

What further limits the value of the comparison with the *carpe diem* advice as expressed in other literatures is the fact that this advice does not spring from one particular attitude. There is, for instance, a considerable difference between the mellow cheerfulness of Horace and the brooding melancholy of Omar Khayyam. Therefore, unless one is willing to engage in a series of definitions concerning the various kinds of *carpe diem* advice, it is preferable altogether to avoid this terminology, even though the "make-holiday" phrase of the Antef song so readily lends itself to the translation into *carpe diem*. An additional reason for avoiding the term lies in the fact that the "make-holiday" motif is not peculiar to this harper's song but is, as we have seen, a standard figure of speech with a funerary as well as a secular application. We do not deny, however, that the Antef song so combines the "make-holiday" motif with skeptic and melancholy reflections on death as to create an attitude reminiscent of, though not identical with, the classical *carpe diem*.

We shall have to say more about the Antef song when discussing some of the other harpers' songs. For the moment a few points of detail need to be emphasized: (1) The beginning of the song reveals a positive attitude toward death and a tranquil acceptance of transitoriness and thus contrasts sharply with the main body of the poem. (2) Contrary to other harpers' songs which use the "make-holiday" motif, the advice to make merry is here not explicitly addressed to the tomb-owner. This difference is significant, and we shall return to it later. (3) With regard to the structure of the song it should be noted that the flow of thought is governed by association, not by argument and deduction. It is owing to this loose mode of composition, which incidentally is typical for oral tradition, that the

essential unity of the poem is maintained despite the break in thought and mood which occurs after the first few phrases. For the flow of association allows the combination of heterogeneous elements and gives to the individual phrase a large measure of independence. This technique also accounts for the fact that the motifs of the Antef song reappear with many variations in the other harpers' songs where, through minor changes, they were stripped of their original meaning and used to create new songs in a new vein.

### 2. NEFERHOTEP I

The setting of this song is the offering-table scene (see above, p. 178). The tomb dates from the reign of Haremhab. Our text (see Pl. VII)[71] is based on a combination of photographs, previous publications, and a photograph of Hoskins' manuscript.

(1) Thus speaks the harpist who is in the tomb of the Osiris, the divine father of Amun, Neferhotep the justified; he says:

How reposed[a] (2) is this righteous lord!
The kindly fate has come to pass.
Bodies pass away since the time (3) of the god,
New generations come in their place.
Re shows (4) himself[b] at dawn,
Atum goes to rest in the Western Mountain.
Men beget,
Women (5) conceive,
Every nostril breathes the air,
Dawn comes and their children (6) have gone to their tombs.[c]
Make holiday, O divine father!
Put incense and fine oil (7) together to thy nostrils
And garlands of lotus and *rrmt*-flowers upon thy breast,
While thy sister (8) whom thou lovest sits at thy side.
Put song and music before thee,
Cast (9) all evil behind thee;
Bethink thee of joys
Till that day has come of landing
At the land that loveth silence[d]
<Where> (10) the heart of the son-whom-he-loves does not weary.[e]
Make holiday, Neferhotep the justified!
Thou excellent divine father,
Pure of hands.
I have heard all that happened to the ———,
Their (11) buildings have crumbled,
Their dwellings are no more;
They are as if they had not come into being
Since the time of the god.
The ————————
————————[f]
(12) On the shore of thy pond,
That thy soul may sit under them
And drink their water.
Follow thy heart wholly
————————
(13) Give bread to him who has no field,
So shalt thou gain a good name for the future forever.
Thou hast observed th[ese ⌜sem-priests
Clad⌝ in skins][g] (14) of the panther;
They pour libation to the ground;
The loaves are offering bread;
Songstresses ⌜are in tears⌝ ————
(15) Their mummies are set up [⌜before⌝] Re,
While their people are in mourning.
Thou dost not ————
———— (16) comes in her time[h]
And Fate reckons his days.
Awaken ————————
(17) Dwelling powerlessly in that which was made for his shade.[i]
Make holiday, O pure of hands,
Divine father Neferhotep the justified!
————————
(18) No work for the granaries of Egypt,
While his court is rich in ————
———————— (19) again
In order to know ⌜what remains over from him⌝.
Not a short moment has been left out
In ———————— (20) desert.
Those who had granaries with bread to offer,
And those ———— (21) likewise,

[71] A good hand copy is available in Müller's edition, *Liebespoesie*, Pl. I. Our plate therefore gives only a photograph of the text, which, we think, will be welcomed, since no photograph has previously appeared.

They shall spend their happy hour
In ———— (22) time.
The day that grieves the hearts,
That puts the house in ———
(23) Think of the day when thou shalt be dragged
To the land that [ʳmingles people¹][j]
———— (24) greatly.
There is no coming back.
It benefits thee ————
(25) Thou art one righteous and true[k]
Whose abomination is falsehood.
When there is love of rightness ———
———— (26) the weak from the strong;
Not tarries[l] he who is in ———
——— (27) who has no protector.
A commander who ————
(28) Increase thy happiness to perfection
———— (29) Maat, Min, and Isis,
The nourishment which gives ———
(30) ——— ʳshe summons thee in old age¹ to the place of truth
Without ————

[a] *wrd.wy* takes the place of *w³ḏ pw* of Harris 500. The general pattern and meaning of the introductory formula is the same as in the Antef song.

[b] *rᶜ dỉ.f šw:* the reflexive use of *rdỉ* applied to the sun provides an ingressive meaning and seems to be an idiomatic expression denoting the process of sunrise; cf. *dỉ.k tw dw³w* (Brit. Mus. Stela No. 826, 5); *dỉ.k tw r r³ᶜ.k* (Book of the Dead, 15, 24 [Budge]); see also Louvre C 67, 2; Book of the Dead, 15, A, 1, 12 (Naville); and *Recueil de travaux*, II, 72.

[c] Literally "their places."

[d] For the "land that loveth silence" (see *ZÄS*, LXV, 122).

[e] Without the addition "where," or some other emendation, the phrase is incomprehensible. The "son-whom-he-loves" is Horus in his mortuary service for his father Osiris.

[f] The only certainty about the lacuna is that it contained the word "trees" or the name of a particular kind of tree.

[g] The restoration *m ỉnm*, which had been adopted by Max Müller, is now borne out by the parallel text in the tomb of Paser, line 9; see p. 203.

[h] Maspero restored *rnnt* as the subject of *ḥr ỉỉt*, since *š³y* and *rnnt* are sometimes found in parallelism; so in *š³y rnnt dmḏ m ḥfᶜ.k* (Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, III, 237*c* = *ZÄS*, XI, 74). But, according to the *Wörterbuch*, *š³y* always precedes *rnnt*.

[i] I.e., the dead man in his tomb.

[j] Maspero read *šb* and restored *rmṯ* on the strength of Theban tomb No. 49 (see Davies, *The Tomb of Neferhotep at Thebes*, Pl. XXIII): *twk ḥr šmt r p³ t³ šbb rmṯ*. In view of the disposition of the signs, *šbb* is preferable to *šb*.

[k] Apparently 𓏏𓏏 = *m³ᶜty;* see also *Urk. IV*, p. 48, 12–14.

[l] 𓀁𓄿𓈖𓊪𓄿 probably stands for 𓏏𓈖𓄿𓊪𓄿; cf. Neferhotep II, line 6.

The opening phrases of this song follow the pattern of the Antef song. But the remark on the transitoriness of all beings is elaborated by a new motif: the rising and setting of the sun. This is a standard theme of sun hymns, but in the context of harper's songs it is novel. Its use here is significant, for transitoriness of the body is now viewed as an integral part of the cosmic order which is governed by the cycle of decline and renewal, death and rebirth. This perspective does not induce a negative attitude toward death. And, indeed, the outcry against oblivion which in the Antef song follows on the theme of transitoriness is suppressed altogether. Its place is taken by the "make-holiday" motif.

This "make holiday" is addressed to Neferhotep himself. Yet it does not refer to his feasting in the hereafter, for the phrase "till that day has come of landing" clearly indicates that it is the living man who is urged to enjoy himself. The mortuary epithet *m³ᶜ ḫrw* ("justified"), which is attached to his name in the repetition of the "make holiday" (l. 10) is no proof to the contrary. It has slipped in because it was customarily used in tomb inscriptions, and it is no more incongruous than the request for "a good old age" so often included in mortuary prayers. The song starts from the assumption that Neferhotep is dead; but the "make merry"

as well as the moralizing advices to do good are intended for the living man. Thus the poem shares the peculiarity of the texts on stelae, statues, and the like which face in two directions: They all combine funerary and secular motifs in a way which will make the prayers effective and appropriate for life as well as for death.

After the "make merry" appear some fragments of the Antef song's description of the vanity of human activities. But the theme is so reduced as to lack all poignancy. Then comes a long and unfortunately obscure discourse in which advice to live in accordance with moral and religious custom is mingled with the reminder of death.

This song of Neferhotep represents the attempt to compose a harper's song which will be in harmony with traditional belief while at the same time developing the "make-merry" motif in the secular sense in which it was known from the Antef song (i.e., as an exhortation toward merriment combined with a reminder of death). In the resulting transformation the skepticism of the Antef song has vanished and its gloom has been subdued. Thus this text is more than a mere variant of the Antef song distorted by some pious interpolations. Rather is it a transformed version in which the haunting "make-merry" motif is set into a frame of orthodox concepts. This compromise naturally affects the composition and makes the poem less unified and harmonious than might be desired.

### 3. NEFERHOTEP II

The setting of this song is the funerary banquet depicted in the hall of the tomb. The present text is based on Gardiner's edition and photographs.

(1) Thus speaks the harpist of the divine father of Amun, Neferhotep the justified:

All ye good nobles and the Ennead of the Mistress of Life[a]
Hear ye (2) the giving of blessings to the divine father
In worshipping his excellent soul of a good noble,
Now that he is a god that liveth forever
And is exalted in the West,
That they may become (3) a remembrance for posterity,
For every one that cometh to pass by.
I have heard those songs that are in the tombs of old
And what they relate in extolling the earthly[b]
And in belittling (4) the land of the dead.
Wherefore is the like done to the land of eternity,
The just and fair that holds no terror?
Strife is its abomination,
There is none that girdeth (5) himself against his fellow.
This land that has not its opponent,
All our kin rest in it since the time of first antiquity.
They that shall be born to millions upon millions
Come to it (6) all.
There occurs no lingering in the land of Egypt,
There is none that does not approach it.
As for the span of earthly affairs,
It is the manner of a dream.
One says "welcome safe and sound"
To him who has reached (7) the West.

[a] Apparently *nb ʿnḫ* is to be understood; for this designation of the necropolis see Gauthier, *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques*, III, 82.

[b] For this nominal use of *tp t*$^{3}$ meaning "life on earth" see also *ḥtp.w nṯr ḥr ś*$^{3}$ *tp t*$^{3}$*.k* (*Recueil de travaux*, XIV, 178).

This song, to which Gardiner has given the title, "In Praise of Death," is, indeed, an unambiguous glorification of death and the land of the dead and thus very different from the two preceding songs. The poet is well aware of this difference; he actually engages in argument against "those songs that are in the tombs of old" which deprecate the hereafter, and he attempts to refute their skepticism. And, yet, the

hereafter which he has set out to praise emerges from his description as a strangely shadowy place, devoid of all the colorful attributes which the funerary literature otherwise is so intent on bestowing on it. Its chief characteristic in the view of our poet is its peacefulness. Happiness therein is conceived in terms of calm and quietude. Although the gods are addressed in the opening of the song, no further mention is made of them. Nor are there any allusions to celestial topography. The vigorous activities of life, the continuation of which man was wont to expect from the hereafter, are not mentioned. Stress is laid on the all-embracing power of this land of the dead; in other words, on the inescapability of death, a theme which is characteristic of the songs of Antef and Neferhotep I. What, then, is the precise nature of this poem? What is its relation to the "make-merry" songs? And why is it recorded in the same tomb that furnishes a "make-merry" song? Before answering these questions we must look at the third harper's song of this tomb.

#### 4. NEFERHOTEP III

This song follows directly on Neferhotep II on the same wall and is part of the same banquet scene. Our text (see Pls. I, II)[72] is a combination of previous editions, photographs, and a photograph of Hoskins' manuscript; the latter proved most valuable. This is the song:

(1) Beginning of song:
Remember, O heart, that day of death,
May it be put in the heart of him who has a burial,

---

Because indeed there is none (2) who passes it by,
Strong and weak are alike.
Whoever sails north or south during life
Lands on the shore thereafter.
(3) O divine father, what is thy good fortune,
That thou art united to the lords of eternity!
How firm is thy name unto eternity
And glorified in the land of the dead!
Every god whom thou hast served since thou hadst thy being,
Thou enterest in face to face[a] (4) with them.
They are prepared to receive thy soul
And to protect thy nobility.
They multiply the produce of thy hands,
And they shall purify thy beauty.
They furnish the altar (5) of thy mummy,
Every god with his food-portions.
They say to thee:
Welcome in peace, O person[b] agreeable to our ka!
For the divine father of Amun, Neferhotep,
Son of the honorable Amenemonet the justified.
(6) O divine father, I hear the praising of thee
Before the lords of eternity;
One says concerning thee: "He has drawn the Sokar bark."
Thou hast placed Sokar upon his sledge,[c]
Thou hast circled the walls in his (7) following,
⌜When there is illumination for his breast⌝.
He has erected the *ḏd*-pillar in ———
A sem-priest at his duties,[d] he has grasped the hoe
On the day of hacking the earth;
He has recited the liturgy of (8) Busiris.
Good is thy being with the gods!
Thou art remembered on account of thy worth,
According as thou are one who has (right of) entrance into Heliopolis
And one who knows the mysteries which are in it.
For the lector-priest who satisfies the heart of Amun,
Neferhotep the justified.
(9) O divine father, thy soul advances,
Thy sarcophagus ⌜approaches⌝,
Anubis places[e] his hands on thee,
The Two Sisters embrace thee;
Purification is done to thee anew,
Thou art ⌜designated (10) with a work of eternity,
The stone-(image)⌝ of a god in its exact form;
Ointment from the hands of Shesmu,[f]

[72] In Dümichen's edition the text is numbered consecutively with Neferhotep II and another text on the same wall; hence our line 1 corresponds to his line 15.

Clothing by the work of Tayit.[g]
The sons of Horus are thy protection,
(11) The Two Kites sit at the gate for thee
And lament over thy name,
According as thou wast beneficent while on earth
To Amun thy lord.
The divine father of Amun, Neferhotep the justified:
(12) O divine father, thou art remembered in Heliopolis,[h]
Thou art protected (13) in Thebes.
There is no searching after thee in eternity,
(14) And thy name shall not be ⌜forgotten⌝,[i]
According as thou art one righteous (15) in the house of Ptah,
Entering in face to face at the great place;
It is completed with charm
At his great (processional) (16) appearances,
⌜The expanse of eternity knows its radiance⌝.[j]
Thou hast risen and art happier (17) than thou wast,[k]
O blessed Neferhotep, justified!
Thy son is triumphant,
And his enemies are felled forever.

[a] According to Gardiner, means "face to face" (see *PSBA*, XXXV, 170).

[b] On the meaning of *ḥm* see *ZÄS*, LXXV, 18, and *JEA*, XXIX, 79.

[c] The *mfḳ*-sledge is meant; cf. *iw.f im n ḥb skr hrw rdit ḥnw ḥr mfḳ* (Brit. Mus. Stela No. 155, ll. 16–17); similarly *The Papyrus of Ani*, Pls. V–VI. For the drawing of the bark see Book of the Dead, 100, 3. A Middle Kingdom occurrence of the *mfḳ*-sledge is noted in *AJSL*, IL, 195. Taking the Sokar-bark on a circuit of the walls is shown in *Medinet Habu*, Vol. IV, Pls. 223, 226. The Sokar-bark is also depicted in Neferhotep's tomb. On the mortuary character of these ceremonies, including the erecting of the *ḏd*-pillar and the hacking of the earth, see Schott in *Oriental Institute Communications*, XVIII, 78 ff.

[d] *śm m iry.w.f* is to be understood; cf. *The Papyrus of Ani*, Pl. VI, 27 ff., which enumerates the same ceremonies as in line 7 of our text: the grasping of the hoe, the hacking of the earth, and the reciting of the liturgy; see also Book of the Dead, I, 20 ff. (Naville).

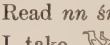
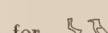
[e] Read *w³ḥ*? For this action of Anubis see also De Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, I, 223*f*, *g*; Book of the Dead, 18, 32; 151 A, 1 (Naville).

[f] *Šsmw* the god of the wine press occurs in *Pyr.* §§ 403*a*, 545*b*, 1552*a*; Book of the Dead, 17, 27 (Nebseni; Budge); 153 A, 8.

[g] For Tayit, the goddess of weaving who clothes the dead, see *Sinuhe* B 190; *Pyr.* §§ 738–41; *Coffin Texts*, I, 254*c*; Book of the Dead, 82, 7.

[h] Cf. *śḫ³:k m ỉwnw* in *Recueil de travaux*, XIV, 178.

[i] Read *nn śmḥ tw rn.k*?

[j] I take  to be for  ; but see above, p. 193, n. k.

[k] Cf. *Pyr.* § 122*b*; Davies, *The Tombs of Two Officials*, Pl. XXVI; Lefèbvre, *Inscriptions concernant les Grands Prêtres d'Amon*, Nos. 33, 1, and 40, 1.

This song, which is separated from the preceding only by the words "beginning of song," is quite different from either Neferhotep I or Neferhotep II. The text has received little attention. But in the over-all picture of harpers' songs it occupies an important place.

Its opening theme is the inescapability of death—a theme by which this text is linked to the preceding songs. But for the rest the trend of thought is entirely different. The dead man is praised and reassured about his fate in terms of the traditional mortuary repertoire as embodied in the prayers of funerary stelae and the spells and invocations of the Book of the Dead. He is told that the ceremonies accompanying the burial have been duly performed, his survival in the hereafter has been assured, and he is well received by the gods, his observance of religious duties during life having secured their favor.

The tomb of Neferhotep thus contains three harpers' songs, each with its own distinctive background and tendencies. Neferhotep I is a "make-merry" song of mixed antecedents (i.e., a combination of secular and funerary motifs). Neferhotep II is a praise of death of an apparently unique kind and yet, by virtue of its melancholy overtone, reminiscent of the laments on death traditionally spoken by the mourning survivors. Neferhotep III,

with its emphasis on observance of religious custom in life and death, stands wholly within the tradition of the mortuary literature.

The recording of three such songs in one tomb is a unique phenomenon. Yet the tomb of Nefersekhru with its laments on death alongside a harper's praise of death[73] is indicative of a similar procedure which suggests that it was not too unusual to express conflicting sentiments and views concerning death in one and the same tomb. We do not believe with Erman that the "pious" harper's song—Neferhotep II—was intended as a refutation of the "impious" Neferhotep I.[74] Rather than being refutations of impious ideas, Songs II and III from the tomb of Neferhotep reflect the mental struggles of generations of Egyptians attempting to grasp the significance of life and death. These speculative efforts reach their high-water mark in two periods of Egyptian history: in the Middle Kingdom, when the "Teachings for Merikare," the "Dialogue of the Man Weary of Life," and similar wisdom texts were written, and in the spiritual revolution of the Amarna period. The priest Neferhotep, who died in the reign of Haremhab, must have witnessed the upheaval under Akhenaten as well as the subsequent restoration. And both the emotionality of Akhenaten's reign and the stern traditionalism of his successors appear to be mirrored in the songs of his tomb. His desire to have these three songs recorded in his tomb would indicate his personal preoccupation with the problems dealt with. But we may also hold the spirit of the time rather than this individual man responsible for the uniqueness of the tomb.

It is characteristic of the treatment of these problems that there is no clear-cut solution. Praise of life, fear of death, and praise of death are juxtaposed without sign of embarrassment. An argumentative attitude is there, but no desire to eradicate one position in favor of another; rather there is a tendency toward compromise. This may be due to a truly human wavering between fear and hope. But the deeper reason for it is the peculiar prismatic quality of the Egyptian mind which attacks the problems of life from a variety of angles, always striving toward the center of the secret but never willing to discard any one approach for the sake of another. Oftentimes an organized view is achieved by means of a dichotomic scheme of things, governed by the idea of the pair—a complementary and non-dialectic dualism. Then, again, no such order is achieved, and the manifold and diverging views are only superficially harmonized. Such is the case in the tomb of Neferhotep: the juxtaposition of Neferhotep I and II reveals the same effort at harmonization that is responsible for the compromising character of Neferhotep I. The third song might be considered the solution, inasmuch as it is the triumph of religion, but it makes no attempt to refute the other positions.

Even the Antef song has not escaped the harmonizing tendency. The origin of this song may have been different from that of the others. Its distinctly secular hedonism would indicate that originally it was not intended for recording in a tomb. Rather is it a product of the same literary tradition to which the Wisdom Literature belongs; finally, a king Antef wished to have this poem recorded in his tomb-chapel, for which purpose it was furnished with a fittingly funerary introduction. Having thus become a tomb text, it interrupted the tradition of harpers' songs, which heretofore had been strictly funerary and inaugurated a new trend. But it is only in one tomb—that of Paatenemheb—that the song was

[73] See Kees in *ZÄS*, LXII, 73 ff.

[74] See above, p. 181.

copied in its original form, perhaps because the Amarna period, with its emphasis on the beauty of life, provided a congenial atmosphere. And even there the spirit of tradition and of compromise was at work; for the song is engraved above a strictly funerary scene: the sem-priest administering to the deceased, who is seated at the offering table. For the rest, the forces of tradition have worked upon the song itself, and the result is the version of Neferhotep I as well as the two songs now to be considered.

### 5. SONG OF KHAI-INHERET

The song is recorded in the second chamber of a tomb (Der el Medineh No. 359) dating from the reign of Ramses III. The text occupies the south wall, which depicts the deceased couple seated in front of the squatting harpist. There is no offering table. The song has been published without a translation, and no translation has appeared since then. The present text is according to the publication.[75]

(1) Thus speaks the musician of the Osiris, the chief of the workmen in the Place of Truth,[a] Khai-Inheret (2) the justified;
I say:[b]
I am this lord, this man (in) truth,
Through the goodly destiny[c] (3) which the god himself made.
The form which appears in the body passes away
Since the time of the god;
New generations come (4) into their place.
The souls and the spirits who are in the underworld
And the mummies likewise.[d]
They that built (5) houses and tombs as well,
They are the men who rest in their pyramids.
Make for thyself a tomb in the holy (6) land,
That thy name may last in it.
Thy works of the necropolis shall be reckoned,
And excellent shall be thy place of (7) the West.
(As) the waters go downstream
And the north wind goes upstream,
(So) every man (goes) to his (appointed) hour.
Make (8) holiday, O Osiris, chief of the workmen in the Place of Truth,
Khai-Inheret, justified!
Do not let (9) thy heart be weary, verily, verily!
(Thou) and thy beloved.
Do not vex thy heart while thou existest,
(10) Make holiday, verily, verily!
Put incense and fine oil together beside thee
(11) And garlands of lotus and *rrmt*-flowers upon thy breast.
The woman whom thou lovest,
It is she who (12) sits at thy side.
Thou shouldst not anger thy heart
Over anything that has happened.
Put music before (13) thee,
Do not recall evil, abomination of the god;
Bethink thee of joys,
(14) Thou righteous, thou just and true man,
Calm, (15) friendly, content, relaxed,
Happy, not speaking evil.
Give drunkenness (16) to thy heart every day[e]
Until that day comes in which there is landing!

[a] "Place of Truth" is a name for the necropolis of Der el Medineh (see Gauthier, *BIFAO*, XIII, 153 ff.; Boreux, *JEA*, VII, 113 ff.).

[b] The change from the third person into the first makes poor sense and is probably a corruption.

[c] *ḫ³w* is a corruption of *š³w*.

[d] This phrase is a distortion of lines 4–5 of the Antef song. In its present form it makes poor sense.

[e] Understand *m ḥr.t hrw*.

[75] The plates in Bruyère's edition give the correct readings, but the printed text on his p. 70 contains a number of errors.

The dependence of this song on the text of Antef and of Neferhotep I is obvious. But the changes are significant, and the whole is not without originality. As usual, the dead man is introduced in the beginning. Strangely enough he speaks himself instead of being addressed by the harper. Then the harper speaks again, and just as in the songs of Antef and Neferhotep I, transitoriness is his first theme. In the wording he closely follows the Antef song. The next theme, concerning

the fate of those "that built houses," is also retained in the same place in which it appears in the Antef song. But what our harpist says about them, namely, that "they rest in their pyramids," is, although the phrase is also borrowed from the Antef song, the opposite of the Antef song's remark that "their places have disappeared."

So far the song has retained the order of themes as they appear in the Antef song and has changed their meaning chiefly by the device of rearranging the stock of phrases and by altering the second half of each phrase. This method is an interesting indication of the manner in which the old songs were remembered as well as remodeled. It also shows that the author of this song did some direct borrowing from the Antef song.

Beginning with the phrase "make for thyself a tomb," our poem no longer follows the Antef song. Obviously this advice is diametrically opposed to the letter and spirit of that song. The wording of the exhortation to provide for a good burial is reminiscent of *Merikare*, lines 127–28: "Make good thy house of the West, make excellent they dwelling-place of the necropolis" (*šikr ḥ.t.k nt ỉmn.t śmnḫ ś.t.k nt ḫr.t ntr*).[76]

The "make-merry" motif, which begins at the end of line 7 and runs up to line 14, is closely related to Neferhotep I, lines 6 ff.; but here it is even more elaborate. The "holiday" as described in both these songs follows the pattern of the "holiday" texts recorded with banquet scenes; the Antef song's description of the holiday is somewhat different. It may not be without significance that the "beloved woman who sits at thy side" is absent from the Antef song but is almost always depicted in the funerary banquet and in the offering-table scenes in the tombs.

[76] Cf. also the Djedefhor fragment (above, p. 193, n. e) and *Urk. IV*, p. 123, l. 9.

After "bethink thee of pleasures" the drift of thought is entirely new and constitutes a pleasing bit of originality. The enumeration of moral qualities, which here is mingled with the description of personal well-being, is somewhat surprising in this context, but the motif as such has, of course, a long tradition, being an important theme of the funerary stelae and other mortuary texts.

The allusion to "that day of landing" is familiar from Neferhotep I and III, but its use as an ending is new and very effective—provided that the "make-merry" advice is addressed to the living man. And that seems to be the case, in spite of the epithet "Osiris," which precedes the tomb-owner's name and corresponds to the *m3ʿ ḫrw* of Neferhotep I.

The remarkable thing about this song is that it is wholly cheerful. A tranquil acceptance of death and a firm belief in survival beyond the grave are combined with a healthy joy of living, which is untouched by melancholy pondering. The gloom of the Antef song, already subdued in Neferhotep I, has totally disappeared. One can well imagine the man Khai-Inheret visiting his tomb—and as an overseer of necropolis workers he had ample opportunity of doing so—and priding himself on the beautiful song which adorns it. And surely he could take the "make-merry" advice to heart while holding none but the most orthodox opinions about the hereafter. With the problems which led the author of the Antef song to skepticism and troubled the spirit of Neferhotep thus ignored, the song is an entirely unified and homogeneous composition.

### 6. SONG OF PASER

The song comes from tomb No. 106 at Thebes. It is recorded on the north face of the third pillar from the north in the hall. The accompanying scene is pre-

served only in part. Above, Paser is seated at table; below is the harper and the song. The tomb dates from the reigns of Seti I and Ramses II. The song is published here for the first time. The text (see Pls. III, V) is based on a hand copy and photographs. The shading gives only the approximate, not the exact, length of the lacunae, which unfortunately are considerable.

(1) Thus speaks the musician of Maat who is in the tomb west of Thebes of the prefect and vizier Paser the justified; he says:————

[Bodies pass away][a] (2) since the time[b] of the god,
Others come in their places.
They that built houses and pyramids likewise
Remain in ————[c]
(3) Great and excellent ones who follow Onnofris,
Turn your attention to the prefect,
Behold he[d] has come in peace.
Give ———— (4) Maat,
He offers her to you greatly,
She is beside his breast,
She does not swerve from him any day.
Make holiday, Paser!
[Do not weary thereof][e] ———
[Follow][f] (5) thy heart while it exists,
Make holiday, O lord!
Forget all evil,
Bethink thee of happiness[g]
Till comes [that day of landing].[h]
[Make] holi[day], thou ⌜praised one⌝, (6) . . . .[i]
Let thy heart be glad, greatly, greatly!
Anoint thee with fine oil of Heliopolis,
Prime oil of the god's body.
Behold ————
Make holiday, O lord!
Lo, every good thing (goes) (7) to thy successor,
(But) thou sailest with the good wind of righteousness.[j]
Make for thee ————
———— in it forever.[k]
Make holiday, thou just!
[As] (8) the god ⌜loves Truth
And he sets her before thee,
Bread, beer, wine, and ointment ⌜to[gether]⌝ shall be [⌜before thee⌝]
[Remember] thou (9) that day of "come thou!"
To drag thee to the West,
———— in skins (10) of the panther,[l]
They pour libation to the ground,
Their gifts are on the offering table and on
———
Make holiday, verily!
(11) Increase the happiness to perfection,[m]
For Fate does not cease [to reckon] his days,[n]
And what has been summed up (12) for their hour,
There is no adding to it.
None that have gone have come back.
Make holiday ———
Thou hast become (13) ———
Thou being in the favor of the king
———— Horus Who Loves Truth.

[a] Restored according to Neferhotep I, l. 2, and Khai-Inheret, l. 3.

[b] The writing  for *rk* is an error easily made when copying from the hieratic, where ⲟ and ⲥ are similar.

[c] The general content of the phrase is probably similar to Khai-Inheret, ll. 4–5: the house-builders rest in their tombs, or "in the west" (*imỉ wrt*); cf. Neferhotep II, l. 7.

[d] Taking *mk śt* to be for *mk św;* but perhaps *ḥr* has been omitted after *mk śt*, meaning "they say: welcome in peace."

[e] Part of *wrd* is visible, and see Khai-Inheret, l. 8.

[f] Restored according to the Antef song, l. 9; *wnn.f* might be a mistake for *wnn.k*.

[g] This spelling of *rśw*, "happiness," occurs elsewhere; see Davies, *The Tomb of Neferhotep at Thebes*, Pls. XXXVI–XXXVIII, and Louvre A 74.

[h] Restored after Neferhotep I, l. 9. The length of the lacuna is adequate.

[i] I do not understand *ỉr śwt*.

[j] This is a beautiful pun on *m³ᶜw*, "wind," and *m³ᶜt*, "righteousness"; it is also an unusual metaphor for which I have no parallel. But see the "fair wind" in Book of the Dead, 15, 45 (Budge). Note also that the sign of the sail does double duty as determinative of *m³ᶜ*, "sail," and ideogram of *m³ᶜw*, "wind."

[k] This phrase might be restored according to Khai-Inheret, ll. 5–6, but the same words can not be used because of the signs visible after *ỉr n.k* and the *ỉm.f* in place of *ỉm.ś*.

[l] Cf. Neferhotep I, l. 14.

[m] Cf. Neferhotep I, l. 28.
[n] Restored after Neferhotep I, l. 16.

In spite of its fragmentary state, the nature of this text is recognizable. It represents a striking case of patchwork, an eclectic mixture of motifs drawn from the various "make-merry" songs. It also borrows from the other harpers' songs. Transitoriness in the shortened version in which it occurs in the song of Khai-Inheret is still the first theme. The address to the gods or deified dead "who follow Onnofris" is reminiscent of the opening of Neferhotep II, while the "come-in-peace" formula recalls Neferhotep III, line 5. "She is beside his breast, etc.," here apparently said of the goddess Maat, is a variation of the formula concerning the heart or the ka.[77] The phrases "forget all evil, bethink thee of happiness, etc.," are identical with Neferhotep I, line 9, and similar to Khai-Inheret, lines 13–14. That all the good things of life remain for the successor is a variation of Antef's "you can't take it with you."[78] The reminder of the day of burial follows the pattern of Neferhotep I, line 14. The phrase "increase the happiness" occurs similarly both in Antef and Neferhotep I. "None that have gone have come back" is familiar from the Antef song. Additional parallels have been listed in the notes.

The "make-holiday" phrase occurs seven times in this text and thus becomes a sort of refrain. But, of the actual description of the holiday, only a few elements have remained, and they are scattered throughout the text. The mortuary motifs are more prominent here than they were in the other "make-merry" songs; yet the "make-merry" advice has retained its secular meaning.

A specific attitude or governing idea which would hold the song together is not discernible. No other harper's song has done so much borrowing and achieved so little unity. The text is a typical latecomer in which the once fresh ideas have become clichés.

The song of Paser is the last in the line of "make-merry" songs. The remaining harpers' songs do not display the "make-holiday" or any of the motifs characteristic of the "make-merry" songs. They are devoted to reassuring the tomb-owner about his fate in the hereafter and are wholly within the tradition of mortuary literature.

[77] See above, p. 189, n. c.
[78] See Harris 500, VII, 2, and above, p. 193, n. l.

### 7. SONG OF PIAY

The song comes from tomb No. 263 at Thebes, where it is recorded on the left door reveal, and is published here for the first time. The scene shows the harper facing the seated figure of the deceased. The tomb dates from the reign of Ramses II. The reading is based on a photograph (see Pls. IV*a*, VI*a*).

(1) Thus speaks the master of musicians who is in the tomb of the scribe Piay; [he says]:
(2) Thou awakenest in peace in thy tomb,
Thy prayers have been heard,
And thou art called.
Thy son ⌜is praised⌝ ———
——— (3) thy house upon earth.
Thou followest thy god in the district of Peker
At his beautiful feast of the Neshmet bark.[a]
There is made (4) for thee a great sacrifice ⌜out[side]⌝[b] of thy tomb,
Thy soul comes forth at the voice of the ka-priest[c]
To (5) receive the things laid down for it.

———

Thou [hear]est the prayers of the children of thy house.
(6) One who sees Re at dawn,
Thou goest to rest when Atum is at rest.
———— Field (7) of Reeds
With (8) the food of the gods.
Thou minglest (9) with the Followers of Horus,
Thou art one of them.
(10) Thou hearest ———— on this day,
The scribe Piay.

[a] Read *m ḥb.f nfr n nšmt;* the *n* of the genitive has coalesced with the *n* of *nšmt*. For the same and similar cases of coalescence see Erman, *ZÄS*, LVI, 61. For the whole passage cf. *šms wnn nfr m w pkr m ḥb.f nfr n nšmt*, Brit. Mus. Stela No. 295, 3; also Brit. Mus., Stela No. 170, 6. The feast of the Neshmet bark and the district of Peker are mentioned in countless funerary inscriptions; e.g., Louvre C 3, C 54, C 69, C 166, C 232; Brit. Mus. Stela No. 155. See also Schäfer, *ZÄS*, XLI, 107, for a discussion of Peker.

[b] Read *m-rw.ty*?

[c] There is room for an *f* after *ḥm-kꜣ*; so perhaps "his ka-priest" as in Piehl, *Inscr. hierogl.*, I, 121*k*: *pr bꜣ.i ḥr ḥrw ḥm-kꜣ.f r šsp ḫ.t wꜣḥ n.f* (altering Piehl's to ).

This song shares its phraseology with the mortuary inscriptions on stelae and tomb walls. Only the form of delivery is different. Here it is the harper who speaks and affirms that the favors which the owner of the mortuary inscription prayed for have been granted, while the other class of texts gives the prayers themselves. Typical mortuary motifs are the wishes to attend, as formerly in life, the feast of Osiris in Peker, also to see the sun at his rising, and to become one of the followers of Horus. It is noteworthy that these particular motifs are very common in the Middle Kingdom. In other words, we do not meet here with motifs characteristic of the New Kingdom mortuary texts. Thus there is the suggestion of an archaizing tendency in our song.

The remaining three harpers' songs form a closely related group and will, therefore, be discussed together.

### 8. SONG OF NEFERRENPET

The song comes from tomb No. 178 at Thebes. Its owner, Neferrenpet, also bears the name Kenro, and the latter name is used in our text. The song is recorded on the south wall of the hall. The harper faces the deceased couple, who are seated in a kiosk and play a game. The tomb dates from the reign of Ramses II. For the text see Varille's edition.

(1) Thus speaks the musician who is in the tomb of the Osiris, the scribe of the god's income, scribe of the treasury of the estate of Amun, (2) Kenro the justified, he says:

Thou callest to heaven,
Thy voice is heard,
And Atum answers thee.
(3) Thou raisest thy voice as godly (4) heron,[a]
And he (5) whose name is hidden greets[b] (thee).
Thou turnest (6) over on thy right side,
Thou placest (7) thyself on thy left side,[c]
Thou sittest down (8) on thy seat ———[d]

[a] The heron or "phoenix" of later times was believed to have power of speech; see Book of the Dead, 77, 7; 125, 9 (Ani); 145, 77 (Budge).

[b] *wšd tw* has coalesced into *wšddw;* cf. Tjanefer, l. 3.

[c] This motif has a long tradition in which two ideas seem to be combined; one is the resurrection, the other is the deceased raising himself from his sleep to partake of the food offered him; see *Pyr.* § 730*a*, and Sethe's commentary to the passage; it recurs in *Coffin Texts*, I, 6*b–c;* I, 234*a;* Book of the Dead, 68, 13–14; 152, 10 (Naville).

[d] Perhaps the "great seat," i.e., the throne of the gods on which the dead wishes to sit (cf. *Pyr.* 391*c*); but an additional element must have been present in the text, for there is too much space between *št.k* and the final *r* for *wr* or *wr.t* alone.

### 9. SONG OF PENNIUT

The song comes from tomb No. 331 at Thebes, where it is recorded on the left door reveal. The harper faces the deceased couple; there is no offering table. The tomb is Ramesside. For the text see Varille's publication.

(1) Thus speaks the musician who is in the tomb of the first priest of Month, (2) Penniut the justified:

How sweet is the dwelling in Thebes,
The heart is in joy every day![a]
On the day ——— (3) ——— thy arms to him
When he comes to thee.
Come ——— (4) ——— to him
When he comes to thee;
So shall one say (5) [concerning thee].[b]
Thou praisest Amun,

Thou seest Re at his rising,
Thou givest (6) praise in the early morn,
Every day without ceasing.[c]
Thou flyest[d] (7) to heaven like the noble vultures,
Thou raisest thy voice like the godly (8) heron,
Atum answers thee.
For the ka of the Osiris, (9) the first priest of Month,
(10) Penniut the justified (11) who is called (12) Sunra.

[a] For this praise of Thebes cf. *w³ḏ.wy mn m ḥnw.ś* of the *Leyden Hymn to Amon*, VI, 10 (*ZÄS*, XLII, 41), which refers to the happiness of burial in Thebes. The passage in the harper's song has the same funerary significance.

[b] Restore *r.k.*

[c] For this passage cf. *di.f m³³ ỉtn dgg ỉᶜḥ nn ³bw rᶜ nb*, *P. of Ani*, Pl. I, 17.

[d] Cf. *ᶜḥy.ỉ m bỉk*, Book of the Dead, 17, 74 (Naville).

### 10. SONG OF TJANEFER

The song comes from tomb No. 158 at Thebes, where it is recorded on the left door reveal in front of the harper's figure. For the text see the publication. Improved readings, based on a hand copy and a photograph are given in our notes.

(1) Thus speaks the musician who is in the tomb of the Osiris, the priest of Amun, Tjanefer the justified:

Thou callest (2) to Re,
Khepri hears
And Atum answers thee.
The Lord of All does (3) the things which please thee,
And he whose name is hidden greets thee.
The sun shines (4) upon thy breast,[a]
He illuminates thy cave.
The west wind (comes) straight to thee (5) to thy nose,
The north wind blows[b] for thee.
Thy mouth is guided to the breast of the (6) Hesat-Cow,[c]
Thou art reverent at the sight of the sun-disc,
Thou cleanest thyself in (7) divine water,[d]
Thou minglest with them who adore (the sun at dawn).
Thou takest thy forms (8) as thou mayest have wished,
Thou givest praise to the Rich-in-Forms,[e]
They are complete for thee, (9) all of these (forms).
All thy limbs are whole,
Thou art justified before Re
And established before (10) Osiris.
Take the offerings of excellence
That thou mayest eat as on earth.
Thy heart is glad (11) in the necropolis,
Thou joinest thy tomb in peace.
The gods of the underworld say to thee:
"Wel[come][f] to (12) thy ka in peace."
All the people who are in the necropolis,
They are given to thee as reward.
(13) Thou art called to say the prayers of a Great One
So that thou mayest establish right,
Osiris Tjanefer the justified.

[a] Cf. *wbn rᶜ n b³ pn ḥr šnbt.f*, Book of the Dead, 100, 8 (Naville); see also *Coffin Texts*, I, 254*d–e*, with "cheeks" instead of "breast"; *Urk. IV*, p. 117, l. 4; p. 148, l. 14; p. 499, l. 10.

[b] I follow *Wörterbuch*, IV, 478, in taking *šmᶜ* as being the verb "to sing," here referring to the sound of the wind. Varille has "Le vent du sud se fait pour toi un vent du nort," which is ungrammatical; note also that *rśw* (not *šmᶜ*) is the counterpart of *mḥy.t* in *Coffin Texts*, II, 389 ff.; also *Pyr.* § 554.

[c] Cf. Florence Stela No. 1617; *Pyr.* § 381*a–d*.

[d] Cf. *Pyr.* § 1140*a–b*.

[e] Cf. *ᶜš³w ḫpr.w m pt m t³*, Cairo Stela No. 34057, 1; *ᶜš³w ḫpr.w ᶜ³ ỉrw.w* applied to *Wnn-nfr* Harakhte in Book of the Dead, 15, 1 (Hymn to Osiris); see also Book of the Dead, 147, 2 (Naville); and *Coffin Texts*, I, 324.

[f] Probably to be read [ ] *k³.k.*

The three last songs are related to each other not merely through a general similarity of content but because they use the same vocabulary. The song of Piay shares their tendency but differs considerably in its phraseology. Thus, while all four texts can be grouped together when compared to the "make-merry" songs, a distinction needs to be made between them. Whereas the song of Piay resembles the mortuary prayers from tombs and stelae, the last

three texts have more in common with the coffin texts and the funerary papyri.

The songs of the Antef-Neferhotep type discussed problems which concerned everyone. They contain argument and advice on a scale and in a manner which suggest that they represent reflections which everybody was invited to share. Not so our last four songs. Their whole concern is with the well-being in the hereafter of the one particular individual to whom they address themselves. No other audience is assumed. Thus the scope and purpose of harpers' songs has been narrowed, and the songs again assume the function which they had in the Middle Kingdom prior to the development of the "make-merry" songs: They are mortuary texts.

However, the "make-merry" songs of the kind represented by the songs of Khai-Inheret and Paser, that is, the late type which has been purged of reflective skepticism, continue alongside the mortuary songs. And it is still possible to have more than one song in one tomb; for the tomb of Tjanefer contains a second harper's song, and this one displays the "make-holiday" motif. The text is a hopeless fragment; but it must have been a "make-merry" song.

## V. THE PLACE OF HARPERS' SONGS IN EGYPTIAN LITERATURE

It will have become clear that harpers' songs cannot simply be classified as being of two kinds, worldly and funerary, as has been done in the past. The situation is much more complicated. The different songs have different antecedents and, in addition, they have an internal development.

The development of the "make-merry" songs can be summarized as follows. They begin with the Antef song, which, though extant in New Kingdom copies only, originated in the Middle Kingdom. That song consists of a melancholy reflection on the transitoriness of life coupled with skepticism concerning immortality and urging enjoyment of the fleeting moment. Its deprecation of death recurs in the "Dialogue of the Man Weary of Life," but the situation there is quite different and its solution is the opposite of Antef's. Nor is the melancholy of our song akin to the lamentations of the *Admonitions* and similar prophetic writings. For there it is actual social and political misery which has led to pessimism; but the value of life as such is not questioned. As to the teachings of the type of *Merikare*, wherever they deal with the relation of life to death their attitude is positive and pious and thus contrary to the Antef song. Life on earth is short, says the sage who instructs King Merikare, but existence in the beyond is eternal.[79] Nevertheless, in content as well as in form, the Antef song is related to these reflective writings known as wisdom literature; but its attitude is unique and its advice runs counter to the letter and spirit of that literature.

The "make-holiday" motif did not originate with, and is not peculiar to, the Antef song. It is the main theme of the banquet texts, orchestra songs as well as prose speeches and legends, which are recorded in the tombs.[80] Although most of this material comes from the Eighteenth Dynasty, there is sufficient evidence to show that the motif antedates the New Kingdom. There is the "make-holiday" song from the tomb of Sebeknekht of the Second Intermediate period[81] and, in addition, the "holiday" without "make" frequently occurs in Middle Kingdom in-

[79] *Merikare*, ll. 55–57; *ibid.*, ll. 123–24 (transitoriness of the body).

[80] I do not know of any such "make-holiday" texts with scenes other than of feasting. But these scenes are not restricted to tombs; they occur even on objects of daily use, as, for instance, on a little toilet box in the Brooklyn Museum.

[81] See above, p. 191.

scriptions in a manner which reveals that it was a fixed topos. The term *hrw nfr* had a wide range of meaning. In addition to "holiday" or "feast day," it could denote any kind of day considered pleasant or beneficial. In the tomb of Paheri *hrw nfr* refers to a day of fine weather,[82] while in the mortuary literature the term is used euphemistically to designate the day of death[83] or the day of judgment in the hereafter.[84] But the more specialized meaning "holiday" is the most common.[85]

It is by virtue of the "make-holiday" motif that the orchestra songs are related to the harpers' songs. But in the orchestra songs the "make holiday" is not the result of any melancholy contemplation of death, for the simple reason that the "holiday" has been transposed to the hereafter: it is in the beyond that the feast takes place. In the Antef song, however, and in those harpers' songs which follow the same pattern, the "make-merry" advice is addressed to the living and is based on fear of death.

The worldly spirit of the Antef song, its relation to didactic literature, and, finally, the fact that it has a funerary introduction which does not harmonize with the main body of the text—all lead to the conclusion that at the time of its inception the song was not intended for a tomb. Its recording in the tomb-chapel of a King Antef was secondary. At that time the mortuary introduction, "Flourishing indeed is this good lord, etc.," was added. Prior to its recording in the royal tomb-chapel the song may have been sung at secular banquets, as is so often assumed; but there is no shred of evidence for that assumption. Having become a tomb text, the Antef song brings about a broadening of the repertoire of harpers' songs, which heretofore had been simple mortuary texts. But although the Antef song is the model for all harpers' songs of the "make-merry" type, none of them has retained its skepticism. The very fact that harpers' songs are tomb songs accounts for the transformation in the course of which the "make-merry" songs become pretty songs without problems. As such they could linger on indefinitely and could survive any amount of bigotry.

The tomb of Neferhotep represents the culmination in the development of harpers' songs. Three lines of development meet here. Three different songs, each with its own distinctive background, set forth their interpretations of death. Neferhotep I is a "make-merry" song which still shows some of the original skepticism. Neferhotep III is wholly pious and traditional. Neferhotep II praises the might and majesty of death in a manner reminiscent of the laments on death and thus reveals that it is embedded in yet another literary tradition. For such laments are attributed either to mourning relatives[86] or to the dead who himself bewails his lot.[87] In these laments the region of the dead is described as a land of darkness and silence. But Neferhotep II sings the triumph of death in a more positive spirit: life is short and fleeting as a dream; death is inescapable. But existence in the beyond is eternal. These motifs, which are set out calmly, recur in the same sober spirit in the didactic literature.[88] Thus Neferhotep II with its multiple literary tradition contributes a new note to harpers' songs.[89]

[82] Tylor and Griffith, *The Tomb of Paheri*, Pl. III.

[83] Book of the Dead, 178, 11; with *nfr* as verb: Florence Stela No. 1774.

[84] *Coffin Texts*, I, 10*f*; 19*a*.

[85] Some Middle Kingdom examples are: Brit. Mus. Stela No. 1049, l. 4; *Eloquent Peasant*, l. 111; *Lebensmüder*, l. 68.

[86] Tomb of Nefersekhru, *ZÄS*, LXII, 73 ff.

[87] Book of the Dead, chap. 175; cf. Kees, *Totenglauben und Jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Aegypter*, p. 307; see also *ZÄS*, LV, 55.

[88] *Merikare*, ll. 55–57; *Max. d'Anii*, 4, 2 (*ZÄS*, LXXII, 76).

[89] The description of the might of death on the Louvre stela C 218 (Pierret, *Recueil d'inscriptions*, I, 137; especially ll. 4–5) could be considered as depend-

Lastly, there exist in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties harpers' songs which are related to the mortuary literature of the type of the Book of the Dead. They guide and console the dead who begins his journey into the beyond and assure him of the exalted destiny which he was anxious to secure by prayer and spell. They are a kind of liturgic response to the mortuary prayer. This purely funerary function relates them to the early harpers' songs of the Middle Kingdom. Thus harpers' songs end where they began.

Some of the motifs of harpers' songs linger on in various contexts throughout the late period. Transitoriness of life and of material monuments, described in direct allusion to the Antef song, is contrasted with the durability of literary fame in the very remarkable passage of the Ramesside papyrus Chester Beatty IV, verso 2,5.[90] Reference to transitoriness is coupled with the "make-merry" advice in the Ptolemaic tomb of Petosiris,[91] where the exhortation is, of course, conceived in the pious spirit of the late "make-merry" songs. And, finally, at the very end of Egyptian history, there is the mortuary stela of Taimhotep with a "make holiday" followed by a lengthy lament on death and the land of darkness.[92]

There are then four distinct literary strata which underlie the development of harpers' songs: (1) mortuary prayers from stelae and tombs, including laments; (2) reflective and didactic wisdom literature; (3) orchestra songs employing the "make-holiday" motif; and (4) funerary spells and invocations as embodied in Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts, and the Book of the Dead.

The language of the Middle Kingdom harpers' songs, including the Antef song, is classical Middle Egyptian. The few Late Egyptian forms in the Antef song, such as the negation *bw* in Harris 500 and *bn* in the Leyden text, cannot be used to assign the song to the Seventeenth rather than to the Eleventh Dynasty,[93] for they can have been substituted by the New Kingdom scribes who made the two copies. In the later harpers' songs the language is the peculiar petrified Middle Egyptian with its sprinkling of Late Egyptian spellings and idioms which was in use for religious and official monuments throughout the New Kingdom.

In setting and in general purpose harpers' songs are uniform. The tomb or the mortuary stela is their place and death is their theme. Their pictorial context is in most instances either the ritual offering-table scene or the funerary banquet. In the few instances in which a different scene is depicted the funerary nature of the song makes the mortuary character of the context a certainty. Hence the function of the harper in all the contexts which we have is clearly funerary. This does not mean that secular harpers' songs did not exist. But the songs that we possess cannot be claimed for the secular repertoire.[94]

The outstanding characteristic of harpers' songs is the diversity of content within the uniformity of setting. Contrary to other classes of Egyptian literature, they

ing on the same sources from which Neferhotep II has drawn; but it is more likely that the text is directly dependent on Neferhotep II.

[90] Cf. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum* (3d ser.), Vol. I: *Text*, pp. 38–41.

[91] Lefèbvre, *Le Tombeau de Petosiris*, II, 90, and I, 161.

[92] Brit. Mus. Stela of year 42 B.C., Brugsch, *Thesaurus*, p. 926.

[93] Erman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 177, assigns it to the end of the Middle Kingdom for just that reason; so also Kees, *Totenglauben*, p. 414. Gardiner calls it an Eleventh Dynasty text (see *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum* [3d ser.], Vol. I: *Text*, p. 41).

[94] The harp was the religious instrument par excellence. A few instances where this is evident are *Recueil de travaux*, XIII, 1; *Urk. IV*, p. 174; Papyrus Chester Beatty, No. IV, recto 7, 3. See also Schott, *Der Gott des Harfenspiels* in *Mélanges Maspero*, pp. 457 ff. But the harp also occurs as a secular instrument (see *Piankhy Stela*, l. 134).

were not bound to adhere to one standard repertoire. This freedom they owe to the fact that a harper's song was always an adornment, never a necessity. The success of the journey into the beyond did not depend on the song of the harper in the manner in which it depended on the prayer and the spell. Hence the songs could branch out and develop in different directions. Thus they became the receptacles of various trends of thought and came to reflect the changes in concepts and beliefs which took place in the course of time. They mirror the simple belief in survival as well as the most elaborate concepts of eternal bliss. They reflect the orthodox and the rebellious, the pious and the skeptic, trends of thought. Love of life, fear of death, and confidence in immortality all find their expression in the songs of the harpers.

## EPILOGUE

It has been customary to compare the "pessimism" or "skepticism" of the Antef song to similar attitudes expressed in the literatures of other peoples.[95] References are made to Ecclesiastes, Epicurus, Horace, Omar Khayyam, and others. It is natural that such parallels should occur to the mind. For we have in the Antef song one of the oldest treatments of the themes of death and transitoriness, viewed from a purely human standpoint without reference to superhuman powers and without faith in survival. But there is little value (besides the purely subjective satisfaction gained from the play of association and comparison) in quoting poets as remote from the Egyptian scene as Horace and Omar Khayyam. For their contemplation of death contains so many new elements of thought and mood that the comparison with the Antef song is bound to be extremely vague, if not misleading. Only Mesopotamian and Hebrew literature are sufficiently close to Egypt in time and space to make the comparison fruitful.

These are the passages that can be considered parallels to the Antef song:

Gilgamesh seeking eternal life after having witnessed the death of his friend Enkidu is counseled by one of the deities:

"Gilgamesh, whither runnest thou?
Life, which thou seekest, thou wilt not find.
When the gods created mankind
They allotted to mankind Death,
But Life they withheld in their hands.
So Gilgamesh, fill thy body,
Make merry by day and night,
Keep each day a feast of rejoicing!
Day and night leap and have thy delight!
Put on clean raiment,
Wash thy head and bathe thee in water,
Look cheerily at the child who holdeth thy hand,
And may thy wife have joy in thy arms!"[96]

At first sight this is a close parallel. Yet the differences are considerable. The Gilgamesh passage says that it is by will of the gods that death has been allotted to man. In the Antef song the gods are ignored. Second, and this is most important, for the Gilgamesh epos life after death is a reality, though an unpleasant one: the dead lead a dreary life in the netherworld. The Antef song has doubts about any form of survival. These two instances should suffice to show that the resemblance, though remarkable, is by no means close enough to establish any claim of influence of the one composition upon the other or even of spiritual kinship.

As to Hebrew literature, several verses of Ecclesiastes offer parallels, especially verses 1–12 of the first chapter. The remarks on the succession of generations and on the rising and setting of the sun (vss. 4 and 5) are strikingly similar to lines 2–4 of Neferhotep I, and the theme of total oblivion to which all human activities are doomed (vs. 12 ) recalls both Antef

[95] See above, p. 194.

[96] W. E. Leonard, *Gilgamesh Epic of Old Babylonia*, p. 49.

and Neferhotep I. Furthermore, we have in Ecclesiastes the exhortation to enjoy the good things of life (2:24, 5:18–19, 9:7–10). But, of these three "make-merry" passages, only the last comes close to the Antef song, for only there is the "make-merry" advice directly linked to the idea of death and the emptiness of the grave. Furthermore, when one views Ecclesiastes as a whole, one cannot fail to realize that its spirit is entirely different from that of the Antef song. The Preacher's theme is not death, but the injustice, the folly, and the misery of which life is full. Nevertheless, his faith is unshaken, and it is through his faith that he arrives at a working solution in his attitude toward life. Ecclesiastes is, therefore, not a pessimistic book. And, as in the case of the Gilgamesh epos, the resemblance of individual passages to the songs of Antef and Neferhotep should not be unduly stressed.

The attitude of the Antef song is one of melancholy skepticism rather than pessimism. For pessimism is a negative attitude toward life, whereas the Antef song is concerned with death and the shadow it casts upon life, which in itself is good. Therefore, although we have classed the Antef song as belonging to the pessimistic wisdom literature of the Middle Kingdom, we should not overlook the different attitudes within this group of texts. There is one, and only one, Egyptian text which reveals a clear, sustained, and radical pessimism; that is the "Dialogue of the Man Weary of Life," which rejects life and glorifies death. The Egyptian prophetic literature and the teachings of Egypt's sages and kings are shot through with pessimistic remarks. But these remarks are due to the observation of specific social and political miseries and do not amount to any rejection of life as such.

If we turn to Babylonia in our search for skeptic and pessimistic thought comparable to Egypt, we find the following: There is no Babylonian counterpart to the skepticism of the Antef song. Gilgamesh is not a skeptic. The poem of the Babylonian Job, *ludlul bel nemeqi*, is a refutation of skepticism and pessimism—a theodicy.[97] The same is true for the Babylonian "Dialogue of Two Friends."[98] However, there exists, just as in Egypt, one composition which expresses a true pessimism, that is the so-called "Dialogue of Pessimism."[99] Here we have pessimism in its purest form, more comprehensive and more radical than in the Egyptian "Dialogue of the Man Weary of Life." For in the Egyptian text the pessimism is perhaps the result of some specific personal misery or grievance. But the Babylonian, who has come to weary of life, is a nobleman who has access to all its riches and satisfactions.

Our intention in making this rapid, and necessarily superficial, comparison of certain aspects of Egyptian, Hebrew, and Mesopotamian thought was to point out the differences rather than the similarities. For our concern is not with the general resemblances of these three cultures but with the specific character of one branch of Egyptian literature and hence with the distinctive voice of ancient Egypt.

## APPENDIX

## BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HARPERS' SONGS FROM MONUMENTS OF THE NEW KINGDOM

### 1. THE ANTEF SONG

*a*) Papyrus Harris 500, VI, 2—VII, 3 (*Brit. Mus. Pap.*, No. 10060).

*Published:*

Goodwin, *TSBA*, III (1874), 380–81 and 385–87.

[97] Cf. Langdon, *Babylonian Wisdom*, pp. 3 ff.

[98] Landsberger, *Die babylonische Theodizee*, *ZA*, XLIII (1936), 32.

[99] Langdon, *op. cit.*, pp. 67 ff.

Budge, *Facsimiles of Egyptian Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum* (2d ser.), Pls. XLV–XLVI, pp. 23–24.
Maspero, *Etudes égyptiennes*, I (1886), 178–84.
Müller, *Die Liebespoesie der alten Ägypter*, Pls. XII–XV, pp. 29–30.

*Translations (selected):*
Maspero, *Etudes de mythologie*, III (1898), 407–8.
Erman, *Die Literatur der Aegypter*, pp. 177–78.
Kees, *Totenglauben und Jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Aegypter*, pp. 414–15.
Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 182–83.
———, *The Dawn of Conscience*, p. 163.
Weill, *Egyptian Religion*, III (1935), 127–28.

*b*) Tomb of Paatenemheb from Saqqara now in Leyden.

*Published:*
Leemans, *Monuments égyptiens du Musée d'antiquités des Pays-Bas à Leide*, Vol. III, Pl. XII (No. K 6).
Boeser, *Beschreibung der aegyptischen Sammlung . . . . in Leiden*, IV, Pl. VI.
Müller, *Liebespoesie*, Pl. XVI.

### 2. Neferhotep I

*Published:*
Dümichen, *Historische Inschriften altägyptischer Denkmäler*, II, 40.
Stern, *ZÄS*, XI (1873), 58–63 and 72–73.
Maspero, *Etudes égyptiennes*, I (1886), 172–77.
Bénédite, *Mémoires de la Mission Française*, V (1894), Pl. IV, p. 529.
Müller, *Liebespoesie*, Pl. I, pp. 31–33.

*Translations (selected):*
Brugsch, *Die Aegyptologie*, p. 162.
Maspero, *Etudes de mythologie*, III (1898), 405–6.
Erman, *Literatur*, pp. 314–15.
Breasted, *Development*, pp. 185–87.
———, *Dawn of Conscience*, pp. 166–67.
Weill, *Egyptian Religion*, III (1935), 129-30.

### 3. Neferhotep II

*Published:*
Dümichen, *Historische Inschriften*, II, 40*a*.
Maspero, *Etudes égyptiennes*, I (1886), 164–66.
Bénédite, *Mém. Miss. Fr.*, V (1894), Pl. II, pp. 505–7.
Gardiner, *PSBA*, XXXV (1913), 165–70.

*Translations (selected):*
Erman, *Literatur*, pp. 316–17.
Roeder, *Urkunden zur Religion*, pp. 60–61.
Weill, *Egyptian Religion*, III (1935), 130.

### 4. Neferhotep III

*Published:*
Dümichen, *Historische Inschriften*, II, 40 *a*.
Maspero, *Etudes égyptiennes*, I (1886), 167–71.
Bénédite, *Mém. Miss. Fr.*, V (1894), Pl. II, pp. 507–10.

### 5. Khai-Inheret

*Published:*
Bruyère, *Fouilles de l'Institut Français*, VIII (1930), Fasc. III, Pls. XXII, 3 and XXIII, p. 70.

*Translation:* None.

### 6. Paser

Previous publication: None.

### 7. Piay

Previous publication: None.

### 8. Neferrenpet

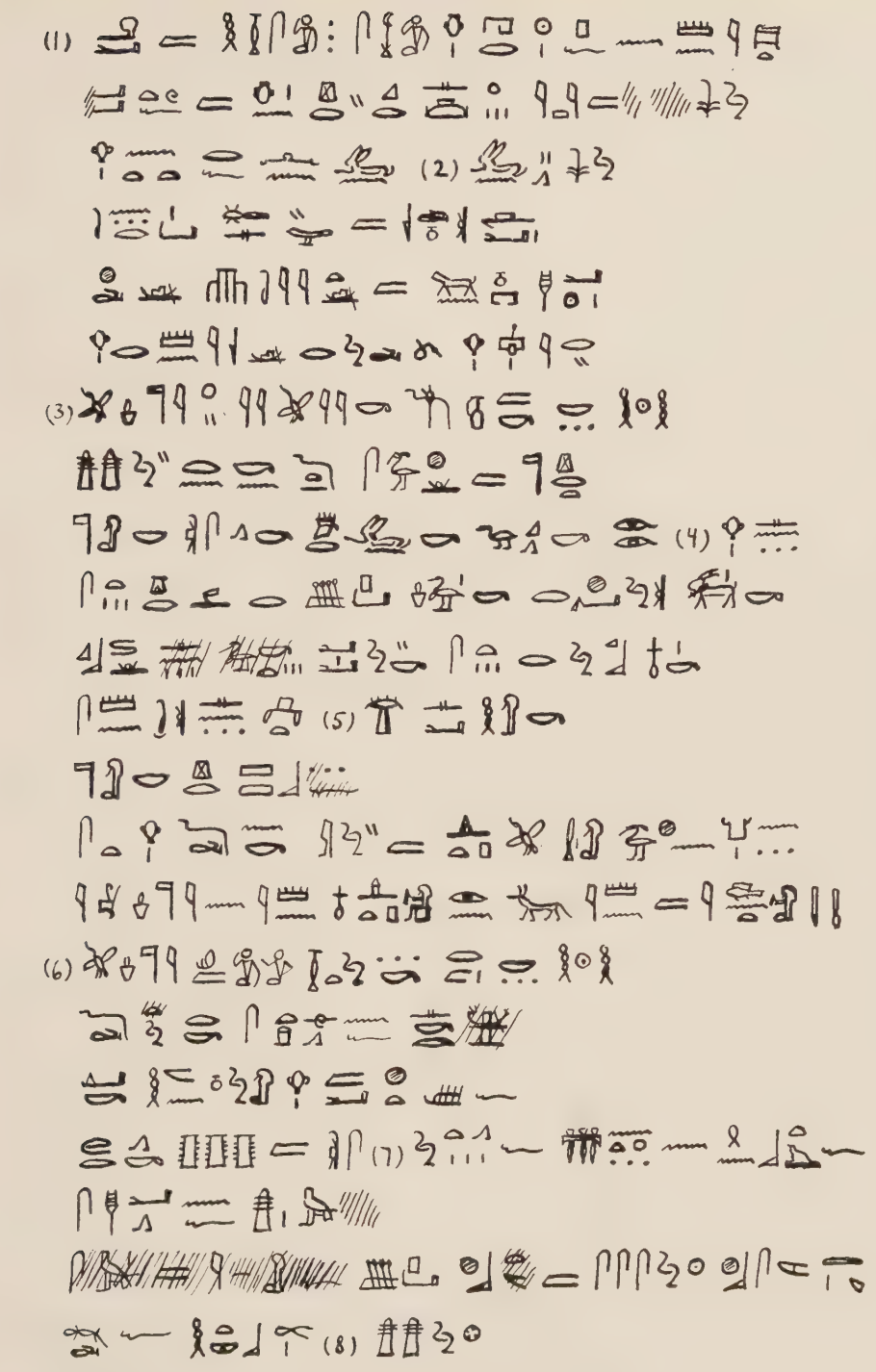
*Published:*
Varille, *Trois nouveaux chants de harpistes*, *BIFAO*, XXXV (1935), Pl. III, pp. 157–58.

### 9. Penniut

*Published:*
Varille, *op. cit.*, Pl. III, pp. 158–59.

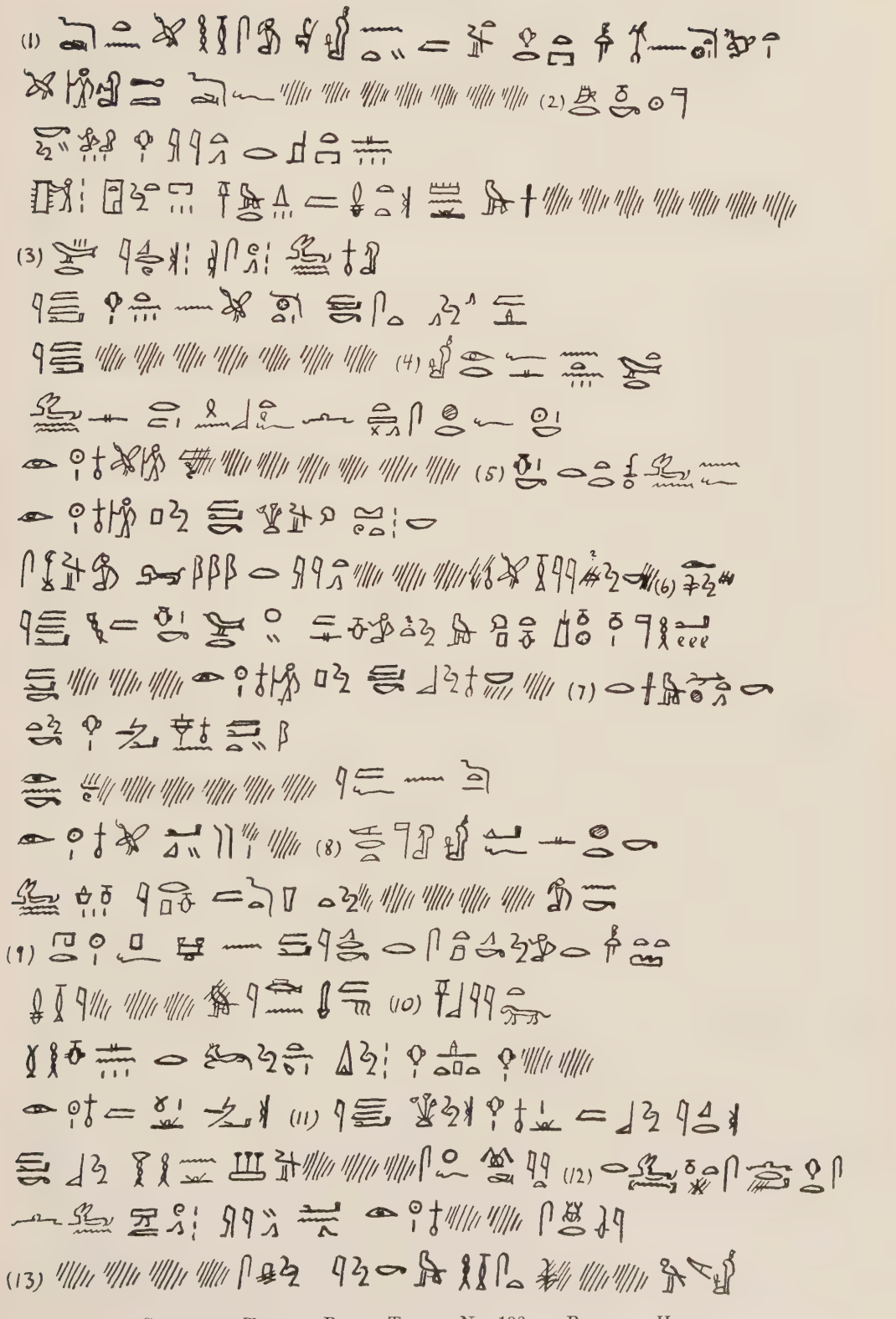
### 10. Tjanefer

*Published:*
Varille, *op. cit.*, Pl. I, p. 154–57.



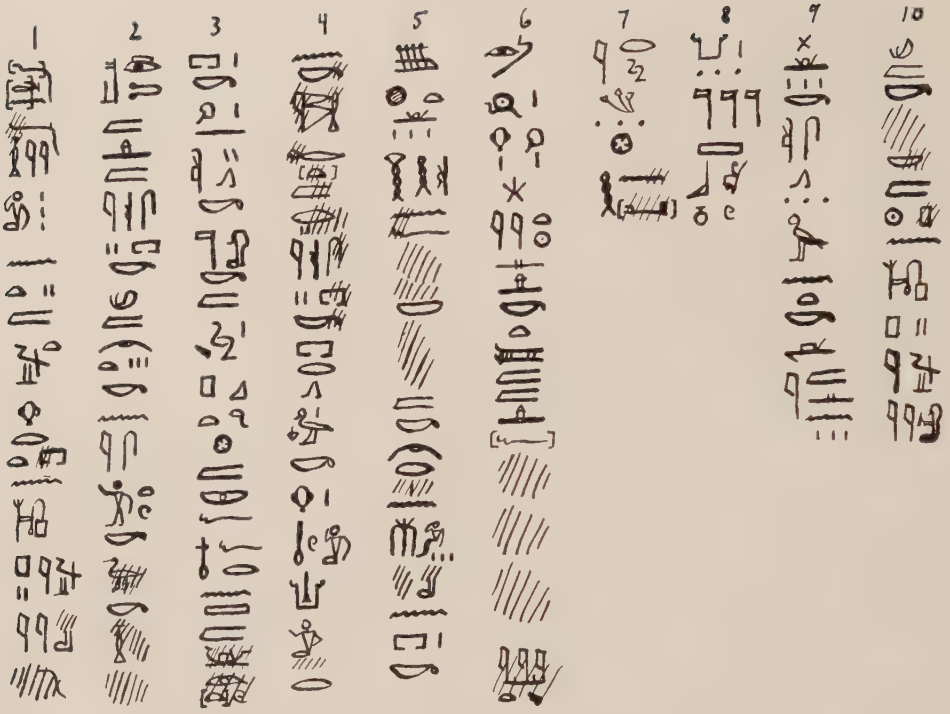
Neferhotep III: Tomb of Neferhotep, Thebes No. 50, Left Rear Wall of Hall

NEFERHOTEP III—*Continued*



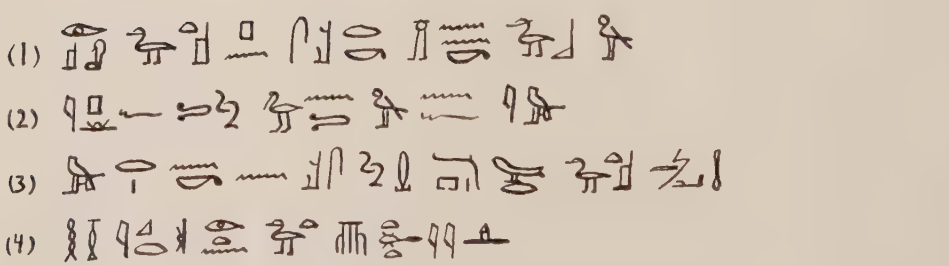
Song from Tomb of Paser, Thebes No. 106, on Pillar in Hall

PLATE IV*a*

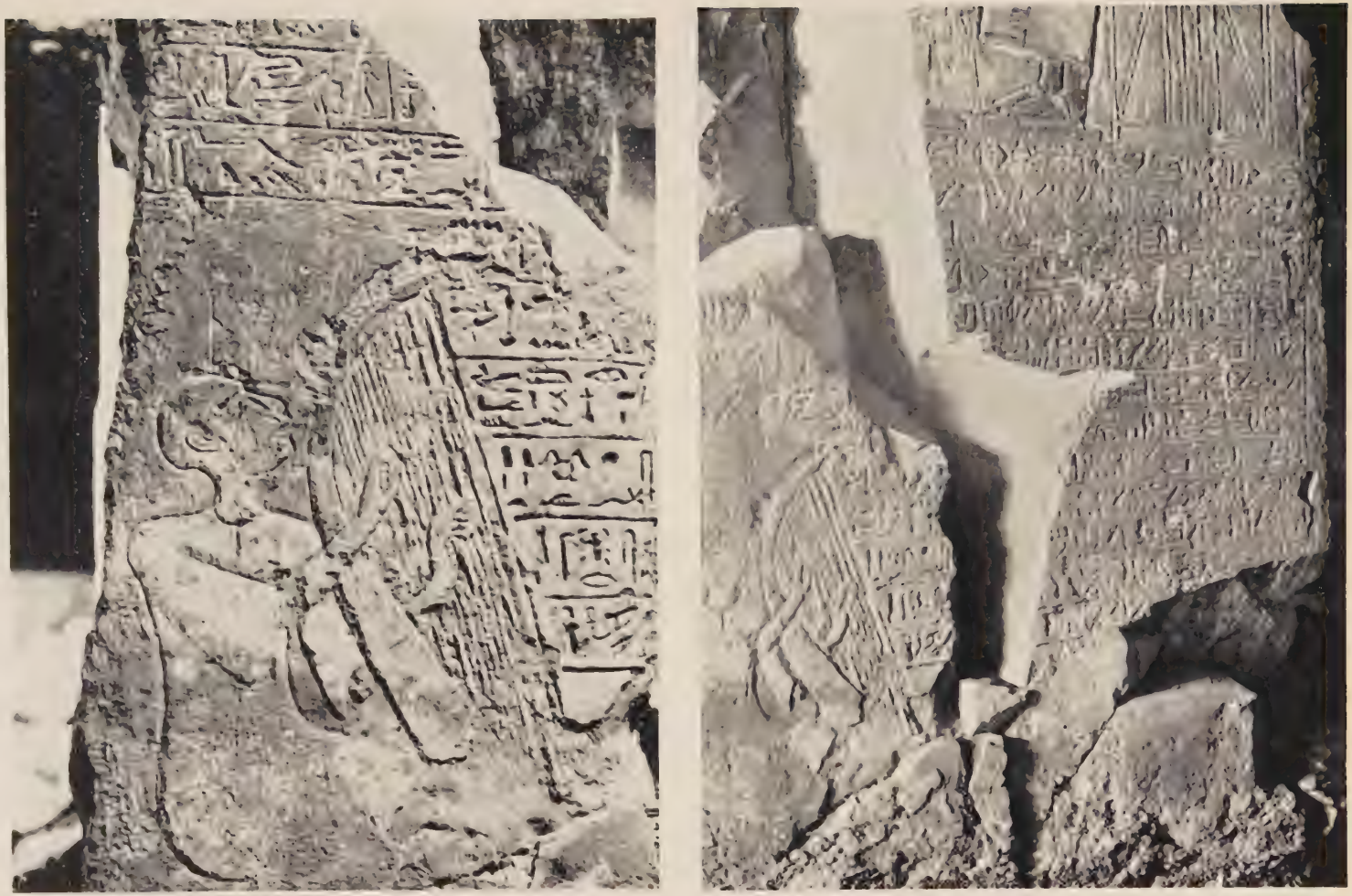


Song from Tomb of Piay, Thebes No. 263, Left Door Reveal

PLATE IV*b*



Song from Leyden Stela V 71



HARPER AND SONG FROM TOMB OF PASER, THEBES NO. 106, ON PILLAR IN HALL (PHOTOGRAPHS BY K. C. SEELE AND SIEGFRIED SCHOTT)

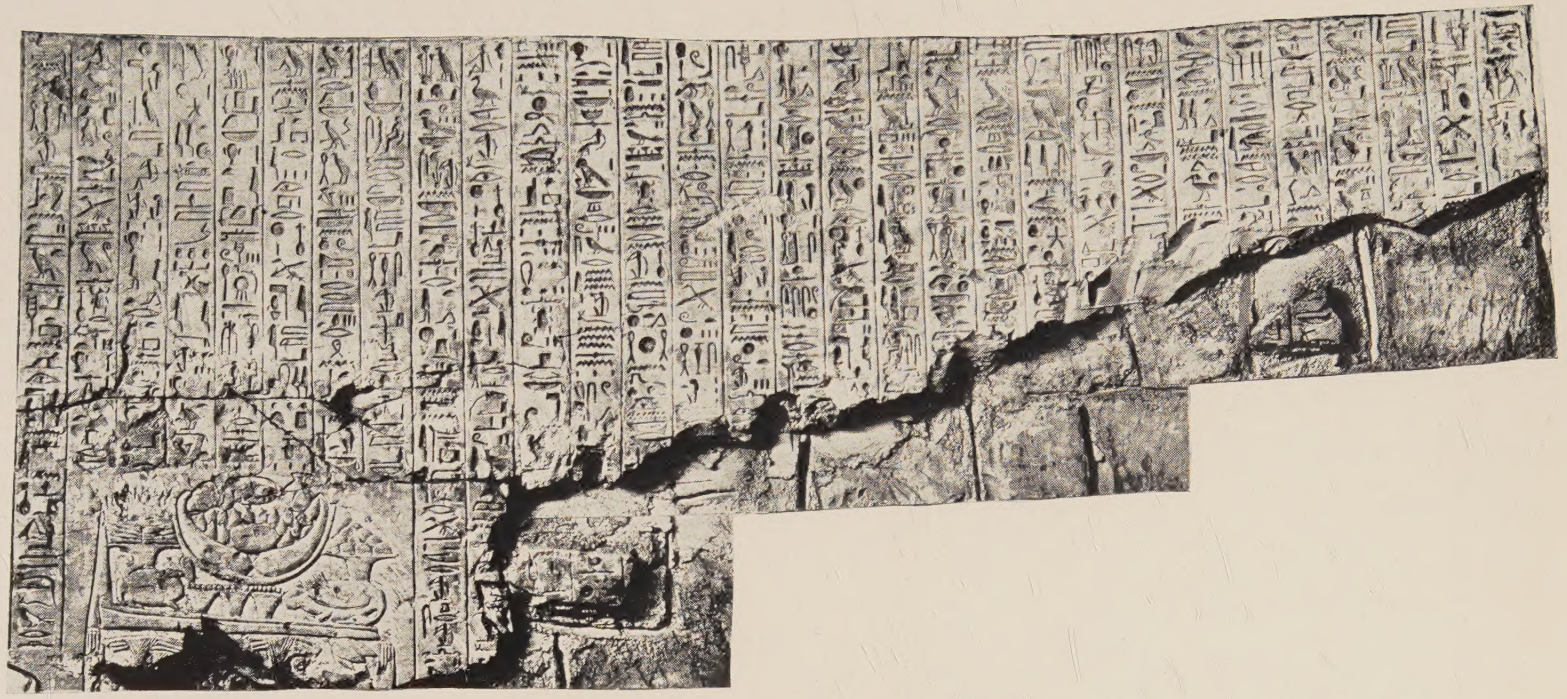
PLATE VI*a*

HARPER AND SONG FROM TOMB OF PIAY, THEBES NO. 263, LEFT DOOR REVEAL (PHOTOGRAPH BY K. C. SEELE)

PLATE VI*b*

HARPER AND SONG FROM LEYDEN STELA V 71

PLATE VII



TEXT OF NEFERHOTEP I: TOMB OF NEFERHOTEP, THEBES NO. 50, NORTH WALL OF PASSAGE (PHOTOGRAPH BY K. C. SEELE)